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M. BRIAND'S new note to Mr. Kellogg is an extremely skillful performance. Under pressure from England and Germany not to let the negotiations break down, France has summoned her ablest men to concoct a statement of her position which will go as far toward meeting America's views as is possible without endangering her system of alliances with the Little Entente and Poland (which undoubtedly looms up in her mind as being a more serious obstacle than her much-vaunted obligations as a member of the League). She now agrees that the proposed treaty shall be multilateral, instead of being confined to the United States and France; indeed, she wants it to be universal, and not to come into effect until all the powers have signed it. She adopts Senator Borah's suggestion that violation of the treaty by any power would relieve all other powers of their obligations as regards the violator. She still wishes to reserve the right to conduct a defensive war, and this matter remains one of the most serious differences between the two countries. Agreement is still probably far off, if indeed it is ever obtained; but the debate itself is valuable, if only for the spectacle it affords of two great nations earnestly considering, for the first time in all history, a proposal to do away with all war of any character.

THE debate has suddenly assumed a new importance in European eyes, which accounts for the insistence of Great Britain that France shall try to work out some basis of agreement with the United States. It has been realized that what the United States proposes is, in effect, a duplication of the work of the League. Instead of hindering the latter, this might aid it in ways of the highest importance. Any power found guilty of aggression under the League covenant would also, in all probability, be guilty of violating the American anti-war treaty. The United States would, therefore, have the strongest possible inducement, if not to participate in League sanctions, to take parallel measures of her own, or at least, not to object if Great Britain, acting on behalf of the League, should institute a naval blockade. It is well known that the British have no intention of doing anything on behalf of the League which would embroil them in a serious dispute with the United States. There will be no League blockades unless America agrees to them, and America will not commit herself in advance to any League plan. On the other hand, Senator Borah, who is Mr. Kellogg's *alter ego* in these negotiations, is insisting now that the American plan for outlawry of war will not only not hurt the League, but will be of the greatest value to it; he declares it is inconceivable that the United States should not join in some sort of disciplinary measures against a nation guilty of violating the multilateral pact. Europe is beginning to ask herself whether the United States is now suddenly trying to become an "associate member" of the League without admitting it? Europe does not know; but it does not propose to let the opportunity for anything so signally advantageous to herself slip by without the most careful and complete exploration of the possibilities.

M. POINCARE'S speech at Carcassonne, following M. Briand's remarks on the subject some time

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ago, marks distinct progress of the plan to settle the reparations and war debts question by means of a German bond issue for a total and final amount to clear her obligations. This would enable her to settle in cash with the Allies, and would enable the Allies to settle in cash with the United States. By this means the "political" and public debts, a prolific source of controversy and economic confusion, would be converted into ordinary economic obligations, and the stage would be cleared for progress. In the past there have been two objections to such a plan. The first was that it would offer no solution for the evils of demanding too large payments, since it is no easier to raise and transfer payments of interest and principal on bonds held by private owners than it is to make excessive payments from one government to another. The second was that it was undesirable, from the point of view of the United States, to associate the reparations question with the war debts question, since the obligations of the Allies were assumed independently of the demands on Germany, the capacity of the Allies to pay is not entirely dependent on what they receive from Germany, and the result of such association must inevitably be to eliminate the Allies from the collecting process, and thrust upon the United States the burden of collecting from Germany. But both these objections can be avoided if the new plan is wisely conceived.

THE first objection to the bond-issue plan—that it would offer no escape from the difficulty involved in too large payments from Germany to the Allies—could be avoided by sufficiently scaling down the total debts which the bond issue is to cover. This result, many experts believe, is bound to be a condition of any practicable issue. The underwriting bankers, in order to have any assurance of selling the bonds as safe investments, must know that Germany can pay the necessary charges for their interest and amortization. Germany's present capacity to do so must be taken as the criterion. That capacity will be pretty well demonstrated by the results of the Dawes Plan in the year beginning September, 1928, when the first full payments become due. The British and American bankers' assistance is essential to the success of the plan, and they will therefore be able to limit the amount to a reasonable and safe figure. Once that is done, and the bonds sold to private parties, the question will disappear from international politics. Though the bonds may be largely held in the United States, this government will not be obliged to act as a collection agency. Poincaré's speech indicates that the French government is ready to assent to a solution of this type, and the assent of France naturally could not have been obtained without some assurance that her debt to this country would be scaled down proportionately to the reparations total. All the reasons for refusing to associate reparations with war debts would therefore disappear in such a solution.

THE sudden death of Frank Willis [writes an Ohio correspondent, Mr. W. E. Chancellor] will have an effect upon the politics of Ohio and the nation that should not be underestimated. He was the political star of Methodism in action, and the peculiar saint of the Anti-Saloon League. He was at the same time the key man of Hardingism in Ohio, and Hardingism was the child of Hannaism and McKinleyism. Hardingism took political regularity as its God. Those of us who knew Frank Willis well, never believed that he was misled and deceived by Harding and Daugherty; but he was willing to play the game in order to promote himself and the interests of the G. O. P. in Ohio and in the nation as he regarded them. Though almost negligible as a speaker on the floor of the Senate, Willis was a power on the platforms of Ohio, in the small towns and rural districts. He had a platform presence and an easy manner that captivated the many, and his voice rang out above all tumults. Though disinclined to see the mystical and the supernatural in human affairs, I am unable to ignore the roll call of the dead since November 2, 1920. Jake Hamon is dead by the hand of his mistress, Clara Smith; dead within a week of the time when Florence King Harding put her arms upon his shoulders at a dinner in Ardmore and said, "Jake is our dear cousin, and we will never forget how he helped to secure the nomination for us." Jake was the legal husband of a cousin of Warren. Penrose, who from his sick-bed in Philadelphia requested the nomination for Harding on that fateful day in Chicago by long-distance phone, is dead. Knox is dead. Lodge is dead. Dr. Sawyer is dead. W. G. H. and Florence herself are dead. . . . And now Frank Willis, who went arm and arm with him for many a year at many a scene, who cried out to the convention, "Come on, boys and girls, let's nominate Harding of Ohio," and who said of Daugherty, "He is as clean as a hound's tooth," is out of the picture. Ohio is now set upon new courses; there is room for new men. The progressives and the liberals and the old-line Democrats of Ohio do not need to fear the alleged "magnetic personality" of Frank B. Willis, who won hundreds of thousands to his standards by his voice and presence and manners and slogans and fixed forms of speech. He had a radiant, warm human quality, and even intelligent men gave way to what they called his "amiable good nature." The new women voters rolled up his vast majorities. The door is now wide open for an abler man and a far less regular Republican to take the delegates of Ohio to Kansas City.

JOHN D. Rockefeller, Jr., and his officials of the Consolidation Coal Company did not appear to advantage in their testimony before the Senate Committee regarding their violation of the Jacksonville agreement with the United Mine Workers. They had agreed to pay a certain wage scale for a certain

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period; they broke the agreement, went upon an open-shop basis, and began paying a lower scale. Their explanation that they really did not break the agreement, because their workers preferred employment at a lower scale than unemployment at the higher one, is a piece of pious evasion. Why should the workers have been unemployed at the higher scale? Only because the company would not operate at a loss in order to pay it. In other words, the company made a contract which turned out disadvantageously to itself, and broke it rather than incur the loss involved in keeping it. A more manly and straightforward attitude would have been to say, "Yes, we broke the agreement, but we did so only because the economic situation had so changed as to make its violation urgent." Industrial relations cannot always be carried out on the basis of hard-and-fast contracts, regarded as inviolable by both sides. But it would be well for our pious Rockefellers to admit it, when they violate what they hold to be a sacred code, for then they might be induced to assume a greater responsibility for the underlying realities of the industrial situation. They might be induced to recommend a sufficient social control of their industry so that contract-breaking would not appear so desirable.

FROM time to time, disappointment is expressed over the results of universal suffrage in America; and it is true that most of the great reforms in politics which were predicted "when women get the vote" have failed to materialize. Yet there are conspicuous exceptions to the rule. The New Republic has observed on more than one occasion that there is no organization of men, in the political field, one-half so intelligent, efficient and devoted as the National League of Women Voters. Its non-partisan character makes possible a scientific approach to the great problems of the present which is refreshingly and startlingly at variance with the attitude of the chief parties and their candidates. A reminder of this is to be found in the "Conference on Public Affairs" of the New York branch of the League, to be held in New York City April 10 and 11. At this conference, leading authorities, men and women, will seek to answer, in round table discussions, such questions as: Who should control our foreign relations—the President, the Senate or the People? What should be our policy toward arbitration treaties, disarmament agreements, the League and the World Court? What would constitute a constructive policy toward Latin America? What are our rights and duties as a creditor nation? The relation of the federal government to water power, coal, and such social problems as child labor, health and education will also be considered. The tariff, the farm problem, taxation are included; there is to be a special session devoted to distinguishing between productive and non-productive expenditures of the government. In a discussion of prohibition, to find out if possible, "What *is* the issue?" separate speakers will advocate enforcement, modification, nullification and repeal.

EACH of these questions is one for the voters to consider seriously in relation to the national election of 1928. There is not one of them on which it is not important to know the views of each of the candidates. Yet up to the present, it is impossible to say where a single presidential possibility of either of the chief parties stands as regards more than a small part of this list. Mr. Hoover has said that he favors "the Coolidge policies" and is in favor of prohibition. Governor Smith has approved, by implication, the state platform of the Democrats in South Dakota, and has issued a message to the New York Legislature which indicated his concern over the farm problem, and that he felt the prohibition law should be enforced. Senator Reed is running, as someone has said, on a platform of moral indignation with no particular object. The old lion now roars only in a mellifluous whisper about his ancient hates, prohibition and the League. Mr. Lowden still lets it be known that he dearly loves the farmer, but that is about all. Mr. Dawes, under the pretence that he is not a candidate, sucks hard on his underslung pipe and does not let even a "Helen Maria" escape his lips. Senator Walsh, who is allowing himself to be used as a stalking horse for the McAdoo drys, has a better excuse than most: he is too busy with the oil investigation to do any campaigning.

THE candidates are keeping quiet as a result of advice from their expert advisers; and from the strictly opportunistic point of view, no doubt it is good advice. The nominations will be made in June, not on a basis of the candidates' position on this or that issue, but because of their general standing with the party and, by presumption, with the voters. If any one of them now says anything, the argument runs, he may hurt somebody's feelings and thereby endanger his own chances. This may be good politics, but it is not good citizenship. The less the people know about the attitude of each man on specific questions before the country, the easier it will be for the bosses to "slip something over" as they did in the Republican convention of 1920. The best thing that could happen in this country between now and June would be for each candidate to be required to answer a questionnaire, saying unequivocally where he stands on every matter on the list of the League of Women Voters' conference.

THE outlook in India as the Simon Commission finishes the first stage of its very hard task is about as discouraging as it could be. The moderate parties have joined with the Swarajists in the boycott of the Commission, the Indian Legislature voted against any form or degree of coöperation with Sir John Simon and his colleagues. The net result, so far, is that the Commission leaves India after two

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months' work without having made any impression worth mentioning. During the summer it will collect testimony on constitutional and other matters in England, and will then return in the fall to India with the hope of completing its work. Its job in any case would have been baffling enough, Indian opinion having been affronted by the tactics of Lord Birkenhead in choosing the personnel. But it is perfectly obvious that a situation already difficult enough has been made virtually impossible by the enterprise of an American woman. The publication of "Mother India" was followed by a tempest of racial hate so widespread and so violent that the Simon Commission stands helpless amid the storm.

IT HAS long been known that opponents of the Fascist regime in Italy were being exiled to small islands in the Mediterranean; but because of a highly effective censorship, little has been heard as to the conditions under which these exiles live. Now a letter from one of them (his name, naturally, is withheld) has been smuggled out and published. On his island, Ustica, there are 320 political exiles. Of these, more than 300 are herded together, twenty or thirty at a time, in large rooms where they sleep on bags of straw. Their quarters are without lavatory facilities even of the primitive sort customary in Italy. There is no water on the island, and this necessity is supplied in large open tanks which are brought by boat once a week. In windy weather a scum of dirt accumulates over the water in the tanks, which nevertheless must be used for drinking and all other purposes. Not long ago the body of a man, either a suicide or the victim of a murder, was found in one of the tanks; and after it had been removed, the prisoners had to go on drinking the water, or die of thirst.

ON THE island, in addition to the political prisoners, many of whom, of course, are men of education and refinement, are some eighty desperate criminals. It is charged that the guards incite these to persecute the exiles, one of whom was murdered in the course of such an incident. There is only one doctor on the island, and he "has expressed the intention of answering only the calls of those of us who can pay him." Since the first of last November the families of the exiles have been forbidden to send them papers or magazines. Letters are censored by the officers of the Fascist militia, in contravention of law, and these gentlemen read the letters aloud to one another and "amuse themselves laughing at the affectionate terms, or items of an intimate nature."

IT IS impossible to say whether the foregoing is an accurate report of the conditions described. The Fascist regime in Rome is like the Soviet regime in Moscow in this regard as in so many others, that it does not permit public criticism or impartial investigation of the manner in which it treats its political opponents. There is no Opposition, practically speaking, in the Italian Parliament, such as might be expected under normal circumstances to bring the plight of these unhappy prisoners to public attention. There is no press in Italy except the official one. A few underground anti-Fascist papers exist, which are printed abroad and smuggled into the country, but naturally, no one dares raise in public any question based on statements taken from their columns. The most that can be said is that there is nothing about Mussolini and his followers which would make improbable the report of conditions on Ustica which we have summarized.

NOT long ago, the cables carried the news that the birth rate in Great Britain for the past quarter was the lowest in all history. Though the item was only a few words under an insignificant headline, tucked away on an inside page of those papers which printed it at all, it is probable that nothing else that day approached it in importance. The English birth rate is now only 30 percent larger than the death rate. This is not because both birth and death rates are comparatively high, as is the case with France. The British death rate is only a little larger than that in America, which is one of the smallest in the world. While the death rate is now practically stationary, the birth rate continues to fall in Great Britain; at the present rate, the population will probably have begun to decline in not much more than a decade. A similar trend is to be noted everywhere else in Europe. Death rates, which have decreased for many years, with the progress of medical science, have begun to stabilize themselves; in most countries they now diminish very slowly or not at all. Birth rates, on the other hand, are going down as fast or faster than ever. They are sinking in Catholic countries as well as in Protestant ones. Even Mussolini, with all his adjurations to the Fascists that they must be fruitful and multiply, has not been able to prevent a decrease in the Italian birth rate of nearly 4 percent per annum. Pressure of population has in the past been used as an excuse by diplomats of the Western European powers for doing many things which fomented international ill will. This pretext may have disappeared before long.

Is the Mexican Issue Settled?

THE agreement with Mexico on the oil controversy has been hailed by the daily press as an unusual achievement of diplomacy, and it fully deserves that characterization. Ambassador Morrow has accomplished in a few short months a remarkable reversal in the sentiment both of the Mexican people in general, and of the important heads of the government. The American State Department has announced its approval of the results he has achieved, and was, of course, fully cognizant

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of the steps by which they were brought about. Only the oil men have not, as we go to press, indicated their position on the new regulations. It is understood, however, that those who were on the ground in Mexico City approve the action taken; and if the New York group should prove irreconcilable, their protest must be made in an atmosphere so unfavorable that their attitude becomes far less important than before. Mr. Morrow's success is an adequate commentary on the failure of American diplomacy in the years which preceded his going to Mexico. It justifies the criticism of that diplomacy by the New Republic and others.

To be sure, it is the business of a statesman to be lucky as well as able, and Mr. Morrow has managed to fulfill both parts of the prescription. His arrival in Mexico coincided with an urgent need for capital on the part of the Calles regime. An external loan is necessary, and can best be obtained in Wall Street, which Mr. Morrow knows so intimately and in which his voice is heard with such respect. When he came to Mexico, moreover, he found the government seriously concerned with the animosity of the Catholics, which (without necessarily implying revolutionary activity on the part of the Church itself) has helped bring several districts into a state of incipient or active insurrection. The Catholic Church and the United States government are the two most formidable potential enemies Mexico has, and the folly had become apparent of trying to carry on duels with both of them at once, even though it is true that the Calles government's anti-Catholicism may have inspired some of America's hundred million Protestants with a sudden and useful zeal against intervention.

Such information as is at present available confirms the belief that the settlement represents a real spirit of concession on both sides and not, as is so often the case in international disputes, the mere discovery of a formula which permits the antagonists to save face without accomplishing any important alteration of conditions. Mexico agrees that owners of oil lands acquired prior to 1917, when the new constitution came into effect, shall actually own these lands instead of getting fifty- or eighty-year concessions. The owner must still have his rights confirmed by the government, but the confirmation is to state explicitly that all previously held rights are maintained. This is a change on Mexico's part of real and great importance. Whether any given property may fairly be called "oil land" depends upon whether any "positive act" of exploitation had been undertaken prior to the date when the new constitution went into effect; and the definition of a positive act has been widened to accord with that of the Payne-Warren agreement of 1923. The United States, on the other hand, now fully recognizes Mexico's right to pass such legislation as Article 27 of her constitution, which claims for the government all subsoil mineral rights, provided only that this provision shall not be retroactive and therefore confiscatory. While we have never said explicitly that Mexico had no right to pass any such legislation, some of President Coolidge's speeches, and some declarations of Secretary Kellogg have been capable of no other reasonable interpretation. All this sort of thing now appears to be ended, so far as the relations between these two countries are concerned.

This settlement will necessarily have an important effect upon the dispute over the land laws upon which Mr. Morrow is about to embark. These laws resemble that which the state of California has passed, aimed at Japanese ownership of ranches. They prohibit foreigners' owning land along the borders of Mexico, and upon the death of present foreign owners of such land, their heirs must within ten years sell at least 51 percent of the land to Mexican citizens. Similar arrangements are required in the case of land owned anywhere in Mexico by corporations. The Americans contend that a compulsory sale of 51 percent of any piece of property within a given period of time is a forced sale, at which full value cannot be realized, and that therefore an element of confiscation enters into the transaction. The dispute is a serious one, certainly; yet it is on the whole less thorny than the matter of the oil lands, and there is good reason to believe that Mr. Morrow has a better chance of success in this case than the other.

Amid the general rejoicing over the solution of a vexed question between the United States and its Latin neighbor, we should not lose sight of the deeper implications of what has happened. Ambassador Morrow has used great skill, tact and friendliness; yet his settlement has none the less represented virtual coercion. If he had spoken on behalf of El Salvador and not the United States, his appeals would have fallen on ears obstinately and permanently deaf. It was imperative, as we have said, that Mexico should obtain a loan which she could get only in New York or London—and so far as the prerequisite conditions are concerned, the two places may be regarded as one. It was equally vital that the use of armed force by the United States in support of her claims—something toward which, a year ago, our State Department seemed to be moving—should be avoided.

Mexico, in fact, has bought off this country by sacrificing an important aspect of her social philosophy. The processes of the revolution, which are still working themselves out, and will be, barring accidents, for many years to come, are predicated on the belief that human rights are superior to property rights. The foreign capitalists who have made investments in Mexican mines, oil wells and ranches, have never had much interest in, or concern for, the welfare of the common man. The enormous wealth which Mexico possesses in the form of oil and other underground resources has been, and still is, for the most part mortgaged to the foreigner. The ambition of the latter is to take it out of the country intact, just as far as that is possible. He

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pays taxes grudgingly, keeps wages as low as the competition of the workers for employment will enable him to. In the days of Diaz, the government coöperated with him in this endeavor. It helped to maintain the workers in a state of virtual peonage, the country as a capitalist's paradise. The first and greatest effort of the post-revolutionary governments has been to protect the common man against the more merciless forms of exploitation.

This is the background which must be kept in mind in considering the policies of the present regime and its predecessors. Their efforts have been to set the peon free, not only economically but culturally. Nothing else has seemed important by comparison. While Mexico has never conceded that its oil legislation was in fact confiscatory, confiscation would not seem, to those engaged in working out this remarkable social experiment, the shocking and criminal thing it does to most citizens of the United States, a country whose own revolutionary period is a hundred and fifty years in the past.

This whole social effort has received a sharp check as a result of the Morrow agreement and the situation which made that agreement possible. Mexico has been made to realize sharply that her independence of action is circumscribed by the wishes of her all-powerful neighbor to the north. If it be true that no controversy between nations is ever settled permanently until both disputants are satisfied, then the Mexican question, and our whole Latin-American policy of which it forms a part, remain open. In this case, our desires have been put forward by an extraordinarily able diplomat; in other instances, and with weaker countries, cruder and more direct means have been employed. But the results are approximately the same. Mexico does something she does not actually want to do, as the lesser of two evils. The greater evil which she avoids is still more serious conflict with the United States. It is, no doubt, a matter for genuine rejoicing that this more serious conflict, which a year ago appeared so likely, has been avoided. Mexico's choice, under the circumstances, has probably been a wise one. But it would be highly unfortunate if we were to fail to recognize that, after all, by the exercise of the threat of overwhelming force, we have persuaded the neighboring republic to adopt a course at variance with her own wishes.

Revising the Anti-Trust Laws

JUDGING by the frequency with which proposals for modification of the anti-trust laws are turning up, the issue is one which may play a prominent part in the 1928 campaign. We were first told that the oil industry needs exemption. More recently, it has been recommended that bituminous coal operators be allowed to combine in order to exercise better control of their market. There is now pending a bill to permit importers to combine for the purchase of commodities the supply of which is, in one way or another, monopolized abroad. At a recent meeting of the Commerce Committee of the American Bar Association, proposals for more general amendment of the law were made. One of these, for instance—by Benjamin A. Javits—would allow monopolistic practices or restraint of trade if they are "in the public interest"—the public interest being defined to include lowering prices, giving improved service, raising quality, and bettering the conditions of labor. The government would levy a tax of 50 percent of anything above a "reasonable profit" made by such combinations—reasonable profit being defined as 8 percent on the actual invested capital or replacement value, whichever is greater, after setting aside reserves for depreciation, improvements, research and contingencies.

It is not necessary to be an anti-trust agitator of the brand of 1890 in order to see the need for analyzing such proposals carefully before giving them indorsement. It is one thing to admit that competition is often destructive and wasteful, is difficult to enforce, and is sometimes antiquated, and quite a different thing to be ready to entrust our fortunes to the hands of a whole series of private monopolies, released from the fear of possible enforcement of the Sherman or Clayton laws, and subject to little if any regulation. Some policy is evidently necessary which shall visualize a sufficient alternative to competition as a protection of the public.

The history of our anti-trust laws and their enforcement is a long, complex and technical one, which could not be justly appraised in less than a volume; but concerning it certain general observations may be made which will not invite serious contradiction. These laws have not prevented the growth and survival of giant concerns in a half-dozen different fields, which are large enough to dominate their markets and to earn virtually every advantage of efficiency which can be gained from mere size. In some cases these concerns have been technically "dissolved," only to retain the greater part of their control under new forms; in other cases the courts have refused to interfere with them on the ground that whatever restraint of trade they practise is "reasonable" and in the interest of the public. Nevertheless, the big business concerns have doubtless been induced to refrain from many of the cruder and more indefensible practices of monopoly by the knowledge that the anti-trust laws are still on the statute books, and that an aroused public opinion might use them more dangerously. There are virtually no complete monopolies except those granted under such special instruments as franchises or patent rights. It is still the official theory, both legal and economic, that at least some measure of competition must be preserved in private business, for the protection of others than the

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owners of the concerns and those who run them.

Wherever, as in the cases of so-called "natural monopolies" such as railroads and public utilities, we have permitted more extensive combinations to arise, we have done so only because of the obvious necessities of service to the public, and have accompanied the indulgence by an intricate system of regulation devised chiefly to limit profits and prices and promote good service. Yet in spite of the large mass of legislation and the efforts of regulating commissions, the constant struggle of the great public utility corporations to be allowed to behave as nearly as possible as if they were unregulated monopolies has rendered ineffectual many of our regulatory devices. In many questions such as valuation and the proper methods of book-keeping, it is still uncertain whether the consumers, through their political agencies, will be able to prevent most of these ostensibly regulated monopolies from retaining what amount to monopoly profits.

Before opening the door to more private monopolies we ought, therefore, to demand a very good demonstration that existing competitive practices are genuinely hurtful to the public interest. No doubt such demonstrations could be made, not only in oil and bituminous coal, but in other industries as well. Still, however, we ought not to relinquish the legal endorsement of competition, even in these cases, without first devising as adequate a substitute as we can, in the light of our experience with regulation of other monopolies. It would be well to experiment more courageously with public ownership, in cases where monopoly is seen to be essential. If ownership is to be left in private hands, however, some efficient form of regulation ought to be devised, adapted closely to the industry in question, and if possible made free from those ambiguities which have hitherto given us so much trouble in utility regulation.

All this leads to the conclusion that no blanket amendment to the anti-trust laws, such as Mr. Javits suggests, would be likely to serve the purpose. It would be all too easy for the monopolist to allege some vague and illusory public advantage, accompanying a very real policy of extortion. Mr. Javits' formula for limitation of profits is doubtless a sample of the best that could be devised to cover industry generally in a general law—yet in practice it would be likely to provide almost no limitation at all. What with the padding of investment accounts and the swelling of expense accounts, almost any profit could be made to look like the permitted 8 percent.

Exemptions to the anti-trust laws should be made industry by industry, as the need becomes manifest, and as sufficient control can be devised and put into operation. The job of control, if it is to be well done, is too big to tackle wholesale, and too delicate to undertake without concentration on particular fields demanding attention.

Moreover, there is a positive advantage to be gained from this method of attack. The trouble with competition is, centrally, that it involves the lack of intelligent planning. Its waste and confusion arise because nobody has thought through the job of the industry from beginning to end, and has had the facilities for putting into effect any large-scale policy. It is, therefore, from the point of view of public advantage, no cure for the ills of competition merely to permit any combination, which may be almost as planless and careless as the separate competitors, and may survive only as the result of a power to buy more cheaply and sell more dearly. Yet this might often be the result of a general lowering of the barrier. The advantage of permitting exemptions only in cases where the need is clearly shown would be that such a study of the industry as revealed the necessity would also lead to a discovery of the major positive policies which a unified control ought to execute. And it would make easier the types of regulation which would not merely protect the public negatively in relation to prices and profits, but would also stimulate the industry to greater order and efficiency.

If we are to progress from the welter and waste of competition toward a better integrated economic order, we must do so with our eyes open and with positive purposes in mind. It will not do to magnify individualism in industry merely by allowing increase in the power of individualistic units, to permit an exaggerated *laissez-faire* for the few to replace the *laissez-faire* of the many. That would be to substitute wasteful tyranny for wasteful confusion. Whatever its defects, the theory of a self-regulating competitive system is at least one that rests upon conscious regard for the public interest, and as such it is a starting point for the creation of a more rational order. No doubt we must permit its gradual destruction to make way for something better, but that "something better" will not arrive automatically with the destruction of the old system. There is no real substitute for planlessness except a plan. Creative social control, built up soundly step by step, is the only desirable remedy for the ills of competition.

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HERBERT CROLY, PRESIDENT, DANIEL MEBANE, TREASURER

EDITORS

HERBERT CROLY BRUCE BLIVEN GEORGE SOULE
EDMUND WILSON STARK YOUNG R. M. LOVETT

ASSISTANT EDITOR: T. S. MATTHEWS

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Laid Off

WHATEVER the efforts to obscure the fact, and the reasons therefor, many people are aware that countless men are again out of work in this country. Fewer, perhaps, realize how little has been done by business to solve this problem since the last period of unemployment in 1921-22, though by study of the business cycle, it was foreseen at the time that another period of widespread unemployment would in all probability occur in a few years.

Great industries, concerned entirely with their own ends, scour the countrysides, where men have had at least a roof over their heads, and suck them into factories, only later to lay them off by thousands, on an hour's notice, leaving them to shift for themselves till needed again. No less a prop of the established order than Herbert Hoover has publicly stated that the problem of unemployment must be solved if the present economic system is to survive. No business executive has the temerity to deny today that unemployment is a problem of management. Yet business executives continue to allow college professors alone to ponder this problem, and to clutter up industrial-relations libraries with exhaustive scientific works on the subject, while they themselves remain, with few exceptions, as casual in their attitude to it as they were seven or seventy years ago.

I recall my personal experience during the winter of 1921-22, an experience that could have been duplicated, no doubt, in almost any industrial city in the country.

War and post-war activity had slowed up. Business had slumped. The local chamber of commerce was no longer importing speakers to whoop up production through teaching manufacturers every known device by which more work could be got out of the workers. Instead, there were now meetings of public-spirited citizens to see what could be done for the more than twenty-five thousand men in our city who were out of work.

All the previous winter hundreds, indeed thousands, of the men in our own factories had worked half time. Many months of this had largely exhausted their savings. And save they had, though I often heard the remark during this period, "If they'd *saved,* when they were getting such criminally high wages, instead of blowing it all in on silk shirts and Ford cars!"

For myself, though I dealt with workmen daily, I had never seen, nor have since, that figure which evoked so much wrath—a workman wearing a silk shirt. As for the Ford cars, at that time they were usually second-hand and purchased by a family of workers more often than by a single worker. It was certainly true that a majority of our own workers, during good times, had started a savings account or payments on a home.

A short-time week having proved more inefficient from a manufacturing point of view than rotation of employees, many factories in town, among them some of our own plants, had adopted the expedient of putting two men on the same job, alternate weeks, in preference to laying off men entirely. If fewer men could have a whole loaf, more could be tided over the depression—nobody knew how long it would last—by at least half a loaf.

Nevertheless, things were becoming acute. More and more distress was being discovered.

It was at this juncture that the president of the local chamber of commerce telegraphed to the president of the national organization, in response to a wire asking that the local chamber act promptly in furtherance of the program prepared by Mr. Harding's unemployment conference:

"Unemployment situation here greatly exaggerated."

I read this bald statement, reported by the daily papers, with amazement.

At this moment the office files of every company in the city that was taking the trouble to investigate the condition of its laid-off men—few were—must have read much as did my own file of Urgent Cases, reported by our special investigator:

Wm. Diffenbaugh—180 Washington Ave.

Main support widowed mother and family of younger children. Absolutely up against it.

Wendell Dawes—1070 Walnut St.

Four children under eight. Obtained few days work at the Express Company, but will be laid off Christmas Day. Fallen behind payments on home. Has borrowed $200 but does not wish to borrow more, as does not see how he will be able to pay back what he already owes.

Peter Minatti—195 Parkway.

Since laid off our company been able to secure work for short time on railroad. Expects to be laid off there tonight or tomorrow. Milkman at door when I arrived. Demanded payment of bill. Mrs. M. told him to leave milk or not as he chose, but she had no money to pay for it. He left milk. Has been leaving one pint per day. There are three children.

Herbert Brooks—228 Barbara St.

Family consists of wife, little boy, father and mother. Put cleaning and pressing sign on the house. Little business from this. Has drawn out savings and used them up. Owes fifty dollars for coal. With other bills in debt about $150. Assets $1, from last pressing job.

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Albert Whaley—40 Kingsbury St.

Lost wife and baby two years ago which left him with heavy indebtedness for funeral expenses. Three small children cared for by mother-in-law. Needs employment badly. A few shovelfuls of coal-dust in bin from last ton, unpaid for.

Jno. Linton—35 Spruce St.

Have put up house for sale. Two small children. Not able to get enough to eat now. Mrs. L. expects to be confined any day.

Pasquale de Angelis—22 Hobart St.

Mother over sixty. Sick last year for three weeks, having doctor every day. This used up their savings. Sister, 20, laid off Candy Factory same day Pasquale laid off in our company. P. has constantly looked for work. Grocer asked how many working in family and when told no one, cut off credit. Not a cent in house nor any food.

Lee Kellar—343 Prospect St.

Sickness in family. At the end of the rope. Has not been able to get a day's work since laid off. Have put mortgage on furniture to meet daily expenses.

August Reese—185 Second St.

Have been living on savings. Very anxious to obtain something before making further inroads but feels he has not much show in competition with younger men. Has had nothing to do, except a few days washing windows, for nine months.

And so on through an unending list.

These men were not ignorant of church or city agencies to relieve cases of distress. But if I had ever been in any doubt of it before, I became certain, during that second winter of unemployment, that the average workman, accustomed to, and anxious to work, will make every sacrifice, of himself and his family, be reduced to hunger, cold, the utmost deprivation, before reporting to such agencies.

There were cases, not on file, even more unforgettable. I recall one of our old, very loyal employees, the passion of whose life had been that his son should have a better education than he himself had had. Through years of scraping and pinching, together with the boy's own efforts, he had at last got him into one of the technological institutes, only to have to take the boy out. As the man sat beside my desk, telling me, not resentfully, but brightly and very understandingly, so far as the company's action in laying him off was concerned—telling me what a year of half time, and another year of even less work, had meant to him, all at once he covered his face and began to shake convulsively. Then he pulled himself together. He was not very well, he apologized. He hoped I would overlook such a display.

There came a time, however, when our company employment offices were no longer crowded to suffocation with men seeking jobs. Even at the state employment bureau the rooms were only comfortably filled now, while the long sidewalk line outside the state bureau had entirely disappeared. Not that the unemployment situation was any better. It was worse. But the time had come—it always does—when laid-off men had begun to think there was no use in making the rounds over and over, only to be turned down. Might as well sit at home and curse the luck. The faces of such men as did come to our employment offices were utterly expressionless. Apathy had succeeded to hope.

I used to watch every flake of snow fall, that winter of 1921-22, with downright glee. It might mean a day or so of shoveling for one of our laid-off automatic-screw operators or expert assemblers.

It was when the situation had reached this stage that the president of our company was prevailed upon to appoint a committee which should study the whole subject of unemployment, particularly as it affected our own organization.

I was one of the nine members of that committee and the committee met weekly, or oftener, for nearly a year. The committee became convinced, first, that employers have a certain control over unemployment, whereas employees have none; and second, that if the company had to pay for its own unemployment it would be more likely than otherwise to reduce the evil to a minimum, just as safety devices were introduced into factories as soon as the Workmen's Compensation Act made employers liable for accidents to their men. Working as a unit under these convictions, the committee gradually shaped an Unemployment Benefit Plan, setting clerks busy examining records of the company's layoffs for more than twenty years previous, in order to ascertain the company's approximate liability in the event the plan should be adopted.

We of the committee tried to keep quiet what we were doing. But letters of inquiry began pouring in on us from all over the country—letters from college professors interested in industrial relations, and from business executives. Some of the latter enthusiastically expressed the hope that our company would take the lead. There had been a few small experiments along this line, but many companies, they wrote, were only waiting for a concern of such size and outstanding importance as our own to accept the responsibility of dealing with the unemployment problem, before they themselves did something.

We of the committee had become convinced that the greatest aid to a solution of this problem would be through experiments by leading manufacturers, and we recognized that our own company, with its prodigious profits and enormous prestige, was well fitted to lead in such an experiment; it could afford to do its part toward social progress by offering itself as a social laboratory.

We were not blinded, however, to the fact that it would be hard rowing to get some of the executives

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who must pass on the matter to agree to any such experiment. Outside the committee, not an executive, not even the president, though he was a philanthropist of renown who had conferred great benefits upon the human race in other directions, not even those executives who were prominently identified with the various social service agencies in the city, had exhibited any special interest in the problem of unemployment, and some of them had been openly hostile from the outset to any suggestion of a plan that would seek to prevent or alleviate this evil.

Business men of marked acumen in their respective fields, they were alike indifferent to the fact that the fear of unemployment, and the sense of injustice associated with it, are two of the most potent causes of labor unrest. They were unmoved by the humanitarian consideration that unemployment and sickness are the two main causes of poverty and dependency; that unemployment means physical suffering, lowering of morale, demoralization; that men, after each spell of unemployment, are less fit physically than before, and have less respect for the economic system that forces unemployment upon them. Least of all, apparently, were these men—most of whom had been sounded out—open to the flattering argument that our own company had an opportunity, in the early adoption of an Unemployment Benefit Plan, to influence many other organizations which were considering, but still hesitating to take, such a step, and only needed the force of a powerful example.

We sat around the long table in the board room. Before each of the executives who would pass on it finally was a copy, furnished in advance, of the plan which the committee members, all busy executives themselves, had worked out after many months of study—a plan which would penalize the company for failure to prevent unemployment, and, to the extent it could not be prevented, would provide some measure of relief for such suffering and anxiety as hundreds of the employees were enduring at the time. Knowing how such things went, we had made the document short, in the hope that those who were to vote upon it would have at least read it through before coming to the conference. We never were able to find out, I may say, how many of them had done so.

The first to assail the plan—not this particular plan, but any conceivable plan with a similar object—was the manager of our Canal Street plant. He didn't care a hang, he said, what happened to the men in the Canal Street plant when they were laid off. There wasn't a workman in his plant, he asserted, worth chucking into the canal. Perhaps he was right; workmen give what is expected of them, and rarely disappoint a manager who considers and treats them as worthless.

The plan was never put to a vote. Every effort of the committee to have it considered on its merits was defeated by a welter of petty comment, most of it wide of the mark. The executive who led the opposition, smothering the plan in ridicule, burying it—with the unbusinesslikeness of business—so deep in funny stories that it would be impossible to unearth it in the company's executive councils for years to come, if ever at all—the executive who defeated it was not the manager of our Canal Street plant. Ironically enough, it was the one man among our higher executives who was known as the workman's friend. A man of engaging personality and powerful influence among his associates, alone among all the directors of a great corporation assembled that day, this executive had arisen from the ranks. He had started, I believe, as a carpenter. He had often fought fearlessly, opposed by his fellow executives, for the rights of the class from which he had sprung. Why, then, had he defeated the one plan which sought to improve the workman's condition permanently, through lessening the insecurity of employment?

I often pondered the matter afterwards.

As I see it, it was, more than anything else, because he had found it a glorious thing to pull out a big roll of bills and peel off one, when one of his "boys," putting pride in his pocket, had come to him, as occasionally one did, with belt drawn in to the last notch. He had handed out individual relief in time of unemployment, with honest tears of sympathy in his eyes. It had given him a thrill. He had adored playing Lord Bountiful. But the correction of industrial ills means the destruction of more than one picturesque charity. Consciously or unconsciously, his opposition to our plan had been based on reluctance to grant to workmen as a right what he had so much enjoyed bestowing on them as bounty.

The conference itself, after the very human nature of business conferences, had broken up in little groups of two or three, chatting about the weather, Chaliapin's singing the night before, anything at all except the matter that had been at stake.

But the day was to be made memorable for me by something more than this conference, which I had left with a chagrin hard to conceal.

As I returned to my desk, my secretary came hurrying into my office.

"There's a workman been waiting to see you for more than two hours. He won't tell anyone else what he wants. He looks kind of queer."

It was one of our laid-off men, a short, emaciated fellow with dark eyes and a few days' beard. A sickening odor exhaled from his clothes. But I had known long before this "laid-off smell." There was not only the high cost of being sick, the high cost of being born, and the still higher cost of dying, of which one became aware in time of unemployment, there was the high cost of keeping clean.

Filled with thoughts of the meeting I had just left, it was difficult for me at first to concentrate on the man's story. Sixteen years, I heard him say, he had worked at one of our plants.

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"What would *you* do?" he was asking now, for the second time, his hollow eyes fixed on mine. "My record will show the kind of workman I've been. Never even taken days off for fishing, like most of the boys. Hunted for work? My God! See this?" He held up one foot, for me to see the sole of his shoe.

"Do you suppose," he asked, and a sneer had crept into his voice, "now that I'm down to the bare flesh, the big boss would lend me one of his cars to go around and look for work some more? He can't be needin' 'em all."

"What would *you* do?" He brought his face rather alarmingly near. His eyes were burning. "Four kids. The missus and I talked it over last night. Better just put an end to us all—the whole keboodle. We can't go on forever on a basket now and then from——"

"Oh, now," I said, trying to quiet him, "you'll be called back, I hope, before long."

But he had started talking again, as though he had not heard me, in a low tone, and fast. "'Produce! Produce! Produce!' they told us. 'Bet your life! Let's go!' we said. 'Overtime?' 'Sure!' And what did we do? Blame fools! Worked ourselves out of a job!"

"There's just one thing I want to ask," he said, when at last he seemed a trifle calmer and we stood at the door. "If you've got any influence with the big guys, tell 'em to never again shoot into us any of that *loyalty* line of talk!"

Someone else was waiting to see me, just outside the door, as the laid-off man left my office. It was our superintendent of maintenance. He held out a sheet of paper. "Will you o. k. this, please?" he said.

It was a requisition on the purchasing department that the superintendent of maintenance was presenting for my signature.

On the sheet I took from him was typed: *1 Colt automatic.*

I looked up.

"Another anonymous letter," the superintendent explained. "One of our laid-off men. It threatens the life of Mr. X—[the president of the company]." The superintendent of maintenance raised his eyebrows. "Thought we'd better put another guard on. We need another automatic."

I went out, not caring much where, only to get away for an instant, but as I crossed the broad vestibule with its white marble walls, I ran into one of our production managers, a member, like myself, of the unemployment committee whose year's work had come to naught.

"Too bad," he said, with a laugh. "But they can't all see it at once. You remember how hard-boiled *I* was, when we first started to consider the matter. But the more I looked into the thing—Well, maybe some day we can get them all to approve a plan."

"Maybe," I said, not trusting myself to say more.

ANNE W. ARMSTRONG.

The Greasy Old Pachyderm

APRIL arrived in Woppington on a Sunday morning. Vagrant vernal breezes scampered up Main Street, entered the open door of the news shop, playfully ruffled the thinning locks of "E. Durkin, Prop." There was an air of well dressed leisure in Elmer's place, the aroma of freshly lighted cigars, the warm glow of chromatic comic sections with their Sabbath story of woman's inhumanity to man and Mutt's inhumanity to Jeff. Before that smiling sun was well advanced, Woppington knew that Elmer Durkin was delightfully observing the traditions of the day.

A cardboard box stood on the cigar case. There was a slit in its lid and on its side the lettered appeal: "Please help the Borah conscience fund."

"Give this old bird a hand," said Elmer earnestly to Chester A. Donner. "Bill is doing his stuff practically solo and he's up against a tough racket. He's set to raise a hundred and sixty grand to get the party out of hock and he's still shy a hundred and fifty-five. Let's all kick in and get the spots out of the Greasy Old Pachyderm. Then we can slip Hard-boiled Harry his guilty gold and clap him in the hoosegow."

"I can't see it myself," said the reliable druggist. "Let those guys do their own laundry work."

That, Elmer held, was no way to look at it. This was a matter of simple rugged honesty. S. buys a bill of goods and fails to get proper delivery. That sort of thing causes widespread disrespect for the law, the church, the movies and the racetrack.

"Tin ear on this," Elmer said to Lester Quigly, for the druggist had made good his escape. "Here's the scenario of the hammy dramy. The G. O. P. has gone in over its bean to buy us this flock of Buckeye broncs, and the cash book is all to the red. The note clerk is handing Deacon Hays some pretty citrous looks when in blows a city slicker. His handle is Sinclair. He's had a sweet day in Continental Con and his benny is all lumpy with assets. He offers to take a big cut of the bad news and all he asks is the gyp concession in the kerosene circuit. Elder Hays gives him his honest Presbyterian Hoosier word that everything will be jake. Holy Willie spreads the gravy around where it won't look so raw. He asks the boys to park a wad of these Sinclair liberties in the ice box and draw their own check. Some do and some don't. Uncle Andy Mellon said 'no' and he was so peeved about it that he slipped Bill fifty thousand washers of his own.

"Nobody can say that the Gamaliel gang didn't do right by their sugar papa. Broad-minded palookas like Fall and Denby played loose and lavish with Harry and his boy friend, Doheny. The more fussy ones held their noses and their peace. Remember this, Quig, when they ladle out the banana oil next summer. The sacred quartette—Coolidge, Hughes, Mellon and Hoover—were among those

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present at this grand oil party and not one of them ever piped a squawk, then or yet. Have any of these silent saints chucked a jit into Bill Borah's kelly?

"Nope, it was old Bob La Follette that upset the sour apples just when the game was in the bag. Then the Democrats dealt themselves a mittful and old Walsh flopped in with his bright lamps and his rotten disposition and began casing the hustlers. Finally it got so noisy that the judges heard about it. The petroleum of finance lost the stuff he paid for and if he doesn't blow himself to another jury he is liable to do a stretch. That's all wrong, Quig, and we ought to give him back his dough."

"I'd like to help, Elmer, but as things are—"

"I get you. The Coolidge prosperity you fell for was brummy, too."

Thus it went through all the mad, merry morning. John T. Wharton, the popular plumber, thanked Elmer kindly for the compliment, but did not invest. Old Dr. Horner, the most Democratic of physicians, gave Elmer his moral support, but declared that the present plight of the Republicans had brought him no insomnia whatever. When church was over, in came that pillar of society, Attorney Horace W. Witherspoon, wearing a silk hat and a look of grave concern.

"I heard you wanted to speak to me, Elmer. Are you in trouble?"

This was the cream of Elmer's little jest. He made a brave effort to keep his face and his English straight.

"Yes, judge. Eighteen or nineteen people have spoken to me today about the shame and disgrace that have come upon the Republican party. They've made a bum out of Will Hays and Andy Mellon's halo is knocked crooked and Sinclair's horses have been ruled off of the Maryland track for moral turpitude and all our leading statesmen look as if they worked in Reisner's garage. I thought that you would like to help Bill and me wipe away the oil smears and get the boys out of the stenches."

Woppington's peerless leader looked coldly at the cardboard box.

"How much have you got?"

Elmer shook the conscience fund, but it gave out no sound. "It's as silent as Calvin. Some have no conscience and some have no funds. But if you would come across with a sawbuck—"

"This is all vicious propaganda to discredit our statesmen. If you have no respect for your rulers, you might at least show some for the day."

"The day? Oh, you mean Sunday."

The Republican Tsar of Woppington took his high hat and red ears out into the spring sunshine, leaving the newsdealer alone with his grief and one badly soiled elephant.

"April, April," said Elmer, "laugh thy girlish laughter."

FELIX RAY.

"Let's Be Comfortable"

The Re-Discovery of America: X

THE store set by comfort in America brings to mind the pioneer. Having spent his day and his life at grips with an uncomfortable world, he lapses at the twilight of violence into as violent a lust for ease. He has trekked a wilderness and shrewdly wrung from it gold and furs and farmland. He is dog-tired. The tough way has hardened yet exacerbated him. It has used his sensibilities, not fed them. Having no intrinsic value in his labor, save its continuance, and hence no comfort in it, he looks on comfort as a thing apart; yet since his labor has conditioned nerve and mind, comfort to touch him must be at the same pitch. He loafs, drinks, gambles in converse mood from that in which he sweated in the saddle; but with the same intensity, the same obsession. He has strained hard in work, now he collapses hard in ease. The attitude of the man deeply has not altered. Hard liquor after hard labor; rough bouts of sex after his warfare with the elements, and heavy sleep to top the torpor of the empty march. The Puritan, also, with his wilful hoist into those ascetic rigors which so well met the pioneer's necessity before his world, provides a clue to the American lust for comfort. . . . But we are neither Puritans nor pioneers. The historic analogue would serve no understanding, did not the forces that made the first Americans what they were, make us.

We might say that the early American had a set of ideals and an axe; he had use for the axe and none for the ideals. But the axe, demanding ever to be used, gave naught to the user, of inherent value: therefore, it enervated and it tired: therefore the user of the axe, losing the value of his displaced ideals and through his present life achieving none beside them, prized the most positive result of his fatigue—which is the need for comfort. Inherent in any life of Power is the cult of comfort.

Long since, then, the stage was set for this primacy of comfort as a value. It rose parallel with the rise of classes like the bourgeoisie whose domain was not authority, but Power. However, even today in Europe, the aristocracies of land and church have not quite lost their place as value-makers, so that the sheerness of comfort as an end has been resisted by old surviving values. In Amer-

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ica alone, the reign of Power being perfect, the cult of comfort grew complete.

The settlers came, ignoring or despising comfort as an extrinsic value, for they were fresh from urban fields and cities. They were a civilized folk, faced with a jungle. They were a people who had lost their inner peace (else they had never come); exiled from spiritual House, bitten with creeds that goaded them to extremities of intolerant behavior, or in revolt against laws and forms of Europe which had injured them. But they were possessed by the need of dogmatizing their escape into a simulacrum of the ideal Whole they had lost and nostalgically longed for. They were above all unconscious of why, truly, they had come; of what, really, they desired: hence they were prodded and victimized by the inner truths and outer circumstances of their life. These conspired with the basic cause. The settlers found an uncomfortable country, a world of marshes, forests, mountains. Famine and war stalked the stockades; winter and summer for the most part were more violent than they had been in western Europe. The Americans were, in brief, a people comfortless—and lacking any cogent value to equilibrate their disarray beyond the will to be comfortless no longer. Genetically and environmentally, they were ripe for the cruel paradox that took them.

In physics, we learn, the energy of motion has the dominant trend to become heat. This is called "entropy." In man, the energy of Power flows into the need of comfort. This psychologic "entropy" may not be reversed. Power with its inherent stages (as we have seen) of fatigue, sterility, inner emptiness, passivity, turns to the lust for comfort. But the lust for comfort does not energize fresh Power. The child of the Power-man is very often a comfort-seeker; but the outcome of his cult is not more Power. An instance of this "entropy" is the American scene. We start as hard expositors of Power; we become soft consumers of comfort. But the means of this comfort are not created by the followers of the cult; they are the product still of men of Power. And a large part of the exercise of Power consists in the selling of "comfort-devices"—mechanical, political, ideal—to those who have already passed into the state where they are essentially "comfort-seekers." If this is so, Power will finally cultivate a race so impotent that it will lack the means even of seeking comfort. . . . But this is a prophecy that does not reckon with the creative forces wresting themselves today from Power's vicious circle. There is yet time. The history of the American people from the days of Franklin to our era of Rockefeller, Morgan, Edison and Ford is that of a nation so vastly endowed with Power, that the entropy to comfort has not yet visibly diminished Power-action.

This, our people, vinculated in the blind processes of Power, "freed" in America to act their bondage where external circumstance enlarged it, came, then, quickly to the need and cult of comfort. And lacked neither genius nor energy to go after what they wanted. America's methods of procuring comfort are so diffuse and clamorous that they may speak for themselves. Plumbing, lighting, heating, locomotion and communication, speed in cooking, buying, talking, etc., etc.—wherever the means of living are stressed as means to comfort, they are American. Modern comfort and American comfort are synonyms through the world. We have myriad devices to make work comfortable, to make learning, medicine, religion, art and life *a comfort*. We have myriad agencies to preach the social dignity of comfort. And since all these means are articulate and persuasive, they have hypnotized our public into the belief that it has what it wants; into ignoring that America is still (as in the days of red men and stockades) one of the most uncomfortable countries in the world.

Of this let there be no doubt. Only Americans who have no experience with other lands, or who are such good mediums for hypnosis that an advertisement speaks to them more clearly than the ache of their own nerves can fail to know that we are a comfortless and an increasingly uncomfortable people. There is more famine in the Sahara, but more comfort. There is more misery in Poland, in Egypt, and more comfort. All western Europe, despite primitive farms, decadent towns, and the growing gnaw of dynastic discord, is vastly superior in common comfort to our comfort-worshiping Republic. We who alone take comfort as a value, who expend genius to attain it, who are the symbol for comfort to all the envious and unknowing world, are gloomy, restless, harried and neurotic—are an uncomforted people.

The truth beneath this fact concerns us. Why has our quest of comfort as a deliberate goal seemed to perpetuate and enhance our lack? The reasons may be divided into the practical, which are the superficial, and the basic. Let us look first at the surface. . . . Children of the age of the machine and of the reign of Power, we have resorted above all for comfort to mechanical devices. Since comfort becomes an external end, plainly not inherent in a life of Power, we consider the means to it external. We use Power to win what Power fails to give us.

Note now that the electric lights, steam-radiators, gas-stoves, phonographs, ready-to-eat foods—the whole numberless profusion of *things* offered us with the suggestion that they will bring us comfort, are the concern of individuals and companies whose end is not our comfort at all, but their own power-profit. Note next, that the word "offer" is a lie: by dint of salesmanship, assiduous, subtle, consciously dishonest, these things are forced on us. We did not guess that they were necessary to our

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comfort until the wits and capital of the land incessantly so schooled us. Then we took them on. Note, finally, that these spawning things at once acquire the force of habit: we come to need them, through the fact that without them we feel wanting. But something "new" is always wanting. The "means" of comfort, habit-forming, value-claiming, make us progressively more dependent on more things, to defeat a perpetual sense of deprivation.

Before long, these things forced on us were so many that they transformed our life. We had to adjust to them: they were the imperious fashioners and masters of our way and our world. We grew utterly dependent on certain kinds of stoves, lamps, means of communication. Not to keep up with these commands of "comfort" came to be figurative exile. We had to work ever harder to acquire them. The delusion of Comfort was serving its master—which is Power.

Our forefathers had lived in a continent made uncomfortable by the jungle of trackless forest, undrained marshes, unmastered mountains. We, having made a clearance, live in a continent made uncomfortable by instruments of comfort.

The experience of this paradox each reader can set forth for himself. Let him follow such clues as these into the facts of his own life: (1) the makers and sellers of the means of "comfort" are Power-persons of the lowest order; (2) the continuous accelerated output of these means must point to the continued lack of what they claim to supply; (3) the centers of modern improvement—the large cities—as they progress, grow more uncomfortable; (4) the majority of "comfort" appliances are not bought for the reasons professed, but as means of display or merely of self-defense against social isolation—in a word, for Power. . . . But a short-cut to what we learn from living in a world devoted to the cult of comfort lies in a simple definition. We know the sources of our cult of comfort. What, then, *is* comfort?

Holding the term to its physical meaning, comfort is a harmony of forces within the body and of those impinging on it. It is a *felt* harmony; which means that the determining factor is inside the man. An internal equilibrium, either in "rest" or in motion, is the heart of the matter; and the value of external circumstance *qua* comfort depends wholly on its assimilation within the felt diapason of the body. Comfort, then, is an inner synthesis; and it is won by a control, instinctive or conscious or both. The essence, in winning comfort, is a control within us.

For example: a man in a Ritz apartment cannot be comfortable if he has a tooth-ache. With no disequilibrate nerves, he might be comfortable in a hayloft. . . . This is all so obvious, that I should be ashamed to write it, were it not that 120,000,000 people—a tenth, and by their own ideal the most "progressive" tenth of the whole human world—live and act as if the contrary were true! By patent definition, comfort cannot be primarily achieved through appliances of any sort. And the more complex the external forces which impinge upon us, the stronger must be the internal control to assimilate these forces into that subjective rhythm which *is* comfort. To be precise, the man who has the principle of comfort may variate it splendidly in a Ritz apartment. But what must we think of a man who, having a tooth-ache, tried to cure it by renting a whole hotel?

A comfortable, comfort-loving creature is the cat. Its principle of comfort is instinctive. Its bodily control automatically can absorb the stresses of the outer world which through ages have conditioned its cat life. It does not disdain a few sophisticated means for comfort, such as a rug or a stove, so long as it can assimilate them to its instinctive balance. A self-controlled man may enrich his comfort with machines. Cigar-lighters and electric fans and gas-stoves assuredly are not hostile to comfort; they are merely irrelevant to the essence of comfort. They become hostile, however, if we assume they are essential. For then our energy will go into acquiring and manipulating them, and be withdrawn from the inner control that should absorb them. Finding comfort still "beyond," in our delusion we will go after more and more machines until we are enslaved and cluttered by them.

We cannot, like the cat, rely on instinctive control. We have surrounded our flesh with machines, furniture, cities, and put upon our flesh demands which our instincts ignore. Our outer nature is one of conceptual creatures; we must have concepts to control it. Even to be physically comfortable, we must have conscious values, conscious concepts. But here, in our America, more irony is at work. The way to the control which is our way to comfort is *understanding:* and among the means to understanding are literature, art, pure science, learning. Through them, in cultured worlds like China, India, France, man achieved the insight within himself and into the relations of life, which gave him wisdom to equilibrate the forces that beset him. We, in our cult of comfort, debauch these essential means of control into spurious instruments of comfort. To be precise, we do not demand truth of our arts, our science, our learning. We want our novels to be candy, our theater to compete with Coney Island: our critics must amuse us, our teachers must flatter us, our scientists must enrich us, our churches must be comfort-stations. Pitifully, we make more remote in our demand for comfort the comfort we demand. . . .

WALDO FRANK.

(*Mr. Frank's next article in this series will be "News Is a Toy," and will appear in our issue of April 25.*)

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Spring Notes

Agnes de Mille

THE last two or three seasons have seen the advent of two interesting newcomers in dancing that aims at composition and characterization. Miss Angna Enters and Miss Agnes de Mille have many qualities in common, though at this very point of likeness they become as widely different as two artists could be.

Of the two, Miss Enters' is a more mature art, and one in every way more singular and distinct. What she does is less connected with dancing proper than is the work of Miss de Mille; Miss Enters herself has found a brilliant phrase to describe her art: compositions in dance form. She aims less at realistic characterization than does Miss de Mille, and more toward such a manner of representing characteristic quality as we are most familiar with in the art of painting. Her achievement is elusive and distinguished. A program of hers has something of the monotony of painting as contrasted with acting, whereas a program of Miss de Mille's, though more realistic and lively as acting, shows something monotonous in the approach to the various numbers and in the lack as yet of any deeply grounded style.

Both these young artists have a remarkable sense of costume, Miss Enters an intangible costume finality, indeed, that is rarely equalled anywhere, Miss de Mille a remarkable eye for stage *chic* and picturesque effect. At bottom Miss Enters is indefinable, remote, almost *macabre*, and blessed with style, as painters use the word—in her case a kind of tragic style. Miss de Mille is at bottom a grotesque, with at least a genuine capacity for style, if not always its possession.

Seeing Miss de Mille through five or six numbers, I am impressed with the boldness of her conceptions; I can see that her schemes are very much her own. The impulse or seed of each is entertaining, and much of its statement holds the interest securely. These numbers are humorous and ironic in the turn they take, and most of them follow, and quite wisely, her quality of mime rather than dancer, and her gift for more or less grotesque rather than tragic or straight emotion. She introduces a good deal of dancing as a number develops its idea, and this fact brings us to the two main shortcomings in Miss de Mille's art at this stage of her development.

In the first place she is not yet a rhythmic dancer, not filled with that infectious rhythm that many dancers in revues and in vaudeville exhibit. Miss de Mille should see to it that the dancing, in its own proper animation and rhythm, should balance with the pantomime rhythm and the characterization that make up the rest of the number. The secret there would be a certain heightening of the idea through dancing, which ought both to intensify and to make more abstract what the rest of the number has been giving expression to.

The other advice to Miss de Mille concerns a clearer statement, a clearer underscoring all through her work. If she is going to be as specific and imitative as she sometimes tries to be, she must make clearer and easier for us what she means to portray. And this clearness is as much needed in the forms of the movement, also; the movement all through needs phrasing up and fixing. She should study for projection in the structure and pattern.

The best of Miss de Mille's inventions that I have seen so far is that based on the Degas drawings. In that she works in black and white, you could almost say black and white light as well as costumes and background; and what she creates is compelling and full of promise, not because of any flowing line or loveliness of rhythm—the dancer remains a grotesque—but because of the blunt invention in it, the dramatic instinct, the rightness of sentiment.

Dennis King

It often happens that some of the best individual performances of the year occur in the musical comedies and revues; but these, unlike Mr. Dennis King's D'Artagnan in Mr. Ziegfeld's production of "The Three Musketeers," are usually in the comic direction or in parts cut to the personality, tricks and fame of the player involved. It is interesting to see this actor add to the swashbuckling and the loverlike impetuosity that the role, as it is written, demands, the grace of quite another sort of spirit. Parts like Mercutio gave him an obvious opening for poetic feeling, accuracy of movement and high-flung phrase. But to see this in "The Three Musketeers" at the Bijou Theater is more heartening far. The artistic conscience and emotional *verve* that keep D'Artagnan going from first to last, with never a sag or stage staleness, is something to wonder at, and even more astonishing is the way in which Mr. Dennis King maintains, through his wit and lyrical instinct, the unreality and adored bravura of the part.

Kai Khosru

Seami, writing about the theater at the close of the fourteenth century in Japan, thought poorly of children on the stage; they introduce an appeal that is apt to be aside from the artistic moment, and, if the scene where they participate is sad, the audience is likely to exclaim in disgust: "Don't harrow our feelings thus."

It is in this direction feared by Seami that the greatest appeal will lie of the child actors that Miss King and Miss Coit present for two or three little runs out of every season, and have just now brought to the Hampden Theater. To this sentiment and natural, loving indulgence is added the appealing fact that the children contribute to the designing of their costumes, the painting of the scenery, and their own make-ups. The production can be admired for the players' charm and sweetness, for the creative encouragement of the young, for the astonishing ability employed in their training, and so on and so on. But these are parental and community reasons; and, though they bear on art, are not the first consideration, which is the fact that, taken strictly, these performances are among the treats of the Broadway year. You can enjoy "Kai Khosru" humanly, but it is even more suggestive taken as art.

Strange to say, these children's enterprise represents out of the whole season the most certainly and completely successful stylization in our theater. Their faces amount to little masks; their voices have as removed a relation to

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what they say as recitative or intoning would have, almost; their delivery is almost as abstract as singing. They have *motifs* where passions are indicated in the story; the heat of their emotions is only fragrance; the thought to be thought is expressed as flowers open to their due forms. There is, too, something fresh and archaic in these child actors' movement that sets the imagination working along the lines of stylization of gesture and ensemble. The distillation and removal carries through every part of the production, through play, acting, music and décor; the unity of style is complete. STARK YOUNG.

Washington Notes

SOMETIMES I think the present political period must more completely demonstrate the incapacity of the American voter to think clearly on politics, or see through even the simplest form of humbug, than any we can ever have again. It seems incredible that the exaltation of mediocrity which has marked the present Republican administration can be matched in the future. When you consider the puny figure of Calvin Coolidge up on his propaganda pedestal, surrounded by Sargent, Wilbur, Kellogg, Labor Davis and Tennis Davis, New, Work and Mellon, it must be admitted that the limit of small men in large places has about been reached. Not one of these cabinet ministers is without a first, second or third assistant more able than himself.

Only to those who have no real knowledge of the man, who are dazzled by the glamor which his vast riches cast around him, will it seem unfair to class Mr. Mellon with the rest of the mediocrities. There is where he belongs. Once you strip his record in the Treasury of the false pretence thrown around it through tax reduction and debt reduction; once you point out the complete lack of originality in the so-called Mellon bills, the automatic nature of the sinking-fund provisions, and the extraordinary mistakes he has uniformly and consistently made in estimating surpluses—once these things are pointed out, it becomes clear to any unclouded mind that there is nothing whatever about his seven years of office-holding to make him stand out above his fellow mediocrities in the Cabinet. The sole difference is that he has vastly more money than any other public official we have ever had, and consequently, greater news value and journalistic reverence and support. Yet the people as a whole, led by their newspapers, look up to Mr. Coolidge and Mr. Mellon with an adoration and respect which certainly no President or Secretary of the Treasury has had in this generation. I honestly doubt whether any President or Secretary of the Treasury in our history has had more. Perhaps even future historians will credit them with having reduced the national debt and lightened the tax burden, through a combination of financial genius and rigid economy, though bigger bunk than that it would be hard to conceive. Yet it has been insisted upon so firmly and consistently and enthusiastically that not only do the people accept it with unshakable completeness, but these two commonplace, shallow officials themselves believe they are responsible for these things.

And actually, Coolidge, the most colorless and inert man who ever sat in the White House, who in the humiliating frustration of our World Court effort and the pitiable collapse of the Geneva Conference, scored two of our most remarkable failures in foreign policy, and who has been in the domestic field without any clear-cut policy of any sort save that of solemn inaction, whose appointments have reeked with personal and petty politics, who has been singularly silent in the face of corruption almost unprecedented in kind and character, who dines with a discredited politician of his party a week after he is exposed as having secret relations with the most sinister figure in America and entertains as his White House guest another politician so discreditable that eighteen years ago a Republican President refused to sit at a public banquet with him—actually, this man will go out of the White House with a greater popularity and prestige than either Woodrow Wilson or Theodore Roosevelt!

The big fact, however, is that he is on his way out. There is now definitely less than a year more of this smug solemnity to be borne. In a little more, now, than eleven months, this whole sour New England outfit which has made politics so gray and joyless, has fomented hypocrisy and increased the insincerity of the necessarily insincere, will be on its way back to Massachusetts. They have been the most cheerless and depressing set of people to look at and talk to that have been here since the Hayes administration. Before that time, I have no personal experience to compare with, but I believe it would be possible to go clear to the beginning without being able to match these for sheer dreary drabness. It is pleasant to realize that, whatever happens at Houston and Kansas City, and no matter who is elected in November, the change will be for the better. The only friends this administration really has are the people, which proves, I think, everything I have said. If they were really good, the people would have turned on them long ago.

But let's hurry away from such sour subjects. Within the past week there has been little important change in the situation in either party, so far as the presidential nomination is concerned. The efficient Herbert maintains his lead, and is unlikely to be harmed by the results of the sudden death of Senator Willis, his opponent in Ohio. The politicians were completely upset by this development, but the line-up seems likely to remain substantially the same. Herbert was, of course, helped by the character of the attacks made on him in Congress. The collapse of the unfortunate Mr. Brand when confronted with his own 1925 letters was one of the most ridiculous things that has happened in politics in a long while. On the Senate side, the attack came from Neely, a West Virginia Democrat, who was allowed to berate and abuse Herbert all over the lot without an answer. The opponents of Herbert on the Republican side made no effort to conceal their enjoyment, while his so-called senatorial friends certainly gave no evidence of grief. It must be admitted that Herbert is not dearly beloved by these senatorial members of the party of his adoption—even by those who have cast in their political lot this time with his own. But then, when you look them over, this

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lack of affection could hardly be regarded as uncomplimentary to Herbert. Rather the reverse. In my judgment, the most significant thing that has happened to the Herbert campaign recently is the marked way in which the journalistic support, to which Mr. Coolidge and Mr. Mellon owe so largely their individual prestige with the people, has shifted around to Hoover.

Some time ago I called attention to the tendency toward him of the godly Curtis press, daily, weekly and Sunday, and I think comment was also made on the fact that the New York Herald Tribune, faithful leader of the Republican journalistic choir, whose boast is that it never sings until the hymn is given out, had abruptly abandoned the "draft Coolidge," "draft Hughes" silliness of Mr. Hilles and swung around for Hoover. Now I can report that not only is the Herald Tribune plugging with its whole earnest soul for Herbert, but that Brother Brisbane, who, it will be recalled, was the ingenious inventor of the intriguing phrase "his second elective term," is boosting Herbert with great regularity and vigor in his daily bedtime story appearing in the Hearst papers and gobbled up as gospel by millions of the toiling masses in all parts of the country. With Brother Brisbane lining 'em out for Herbert as he did for Calvin, with the Curtis press, the Herald Tribune, the middle western and far western organs all halleluiahing for Herbert, it seems to me to mean that not only the same newspaper forces but the same old business interests must be back of Herbert that were back of Calvin in 1924. That these newspapers represent and reflect the business view it is ridiculous to doubt. I think that previously in this place I pointed out the absurdity of believing the business interests are hostile to Hoover. That is a joke. There may be some factions who would prefer someone else. But when you look his newspaper support over, you know it's the same old game played in the same old way.

On the Democratic side, the only real development seems to be the extraordinary bitterness here in Washington between the friends of Governor Smith and the friends of Senator Thomas J. Walsh of Montana. When the facts are examined, however, the feeling is not surprising, because it is perfectly plain that the really virulent opposition to Smith is behind the Walsh candidacy. Obviously and admittedly, Walsh is the McAdoo candidate, and the idea of those who have put him forward is not to nominate him but to block Smith. It will not, I think, be successful, but it most assuredly creates a complication in California. There the dry sentiment in the southern part of the state, I am told, is so overwhelming that with Reed, another wet, in the field to pull votes away from Smith, there is real uncertainty as to the result of the primaries in May. Should Walsh carry the state, it would probably prolong the struggle at Houston, but would not change the basic situation nor affect the final result. There is not, of course, the least chance of the Walsh nomination, and there is nowhere to go except to Smith. Most of the Southern leaders recognize this fact and are preparing the way for the acceptance now.

T. R. B.

Washington.

Waxworks at the Abbey

NOBODY but a very great man could have worn the Duke of Wellington's top hat. It is as tall as a chimney, as straight as a ramrod, as black as a rock. One could have seen it a mile off advancing indomitably down the street. It must have been to this emblem of incorruptible dignity that the Duke raised his two fingers when passers-by respectfully saluted him. One is almost tempted to salute it now.

The connection between the waxworks in the Abbey and the Duke of Wellington's top hat is one that the reader will discover if he goes to the Abbey when the waxworks are shut. The waxworks have their hours of audience like other potentates. And if that hour is four and it is now a trifle past two, one may spend the intervening minutes profitably in the United Services Museum in Whitehall, among cannon and torpedoes and gun-carriages and helmets and spurs and faded uniforms and the thousand other objects which piety and curiosity have saved from time and treasured and numbered and stuck in glass cases for ever. When the time comes to go, indeed, there is not as much contrast as one would wish, perhaps, between the Museum at one end of Whitehall and the Abbey at the other. Too many monuments solicit attention with outstretched hands; too many placards explain this and forbid that; too many sightseers shuffle and stare for the past and the dead and the mystic nature of the place to have full sway. Solitude is impossible. Do we wish to see the Chapels? We are shepherded in flocks by gentlemen in black gowns who are for ever locking us in or locking us out; round whom we press and gape; from whom drop raucously all kinds of dry unappetizing facts; how much beauty this tomb has; how much age that; when they were destroyed; by whom they were restored and what the cost was—until everybody longs to be let off a tomb or two and is thankful when the lesson hour is over. However, if one is very wicked, and very bored, and lags a little behind; if the key is left in the door and turns quite easily, so that after all it is an open question whether one has broken one's country's laws or not, then one can slip aside, run up a little dark staircase and find oneself in a very small chamber alone with Queen Elizabeth.

The Queen dominates the room as she once dominated England. Leaning a little forward so that she seems to beckon you to come to her, she stands, holding her scepter in one hand, her orb in the other. It is a drawn, anguished figure, with the pursed look of someone who goes in perpetual dread of poison or of trap; yet forever braces herself to meet the terror unflinchingly. Her eyes are wide and vigilant; her nose thin as the beak of a hawk; her lips shut tight; her eyebrows arched; only the jowl gives the fine drawn face its massiveness. The orb and the scepter are held in the long thin hands of an artist, as if the fingers thrilled at the touch of them. She is immensely intellectual, suffering, and tyrannical. She will not allow one to look elsewhere.

Yet in fact the little room is crowded. There are many hands here holding other scepters and orbs. It is only beside Queen Elizabeth that the rest of the company

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seems insignificant. Flowing in velvet they fill their glass cases, as they once filled their thrones, with dignity. William and Mary are an amiable pair of monarchs; bazaar-opening, hospital-inspecting, modern; though the King, unfortunately, is a little short in the legs. Queen Anne fondles her orb in her lap with plump womanly hands that should have held a baby there. It is only by accident that they have clapped a great crown on her hair and told her to rule a kingdom, when she would so much rather have flirted discreetly—she was a pretty woman; or run to greet her husband smiling—she was a kindly one. Her type of beauty, in its homeliness, its domesticity, comes down to us less impaired by time than the grander style. The Duchess of Richmond, who gave her face to Britannia on the coins, is out of fashion now. Only the carriage of the little head on the long neck, and the simper and the still look of one who has always stood still to be looked at assure us that she was beautiful once and had lovers beyond belief. The parrot sitting on its perch in the corner of the case seems to make its ironical comment upon all that. Once only are we reminded of the fact that these effigies were molded from the dead and that they were laid upon coffins and carried through the streets. The young Duke of Buckingham who died at Rome of consumption is the only one of them who has resigned himself to death. He lies very still with the ermine on his shoulders and the coronet on his brows, but his eyes are shut; his nose is a great peak between two sunk cheeks; he has succumbed to death and lies steeped in its calm. His aloofness compares strangely with the carnality of Charles the Second round the corner. King Charles still seems quivering with the passions and the greeds of life. The great lips are still pouting and watering and asking for more. The eyes are pouched and creased with all the long nights they have watched out—the torches, the dancing and the women. In his dirty feathers and lace he is the very symbol of voluptuousness and dissipation, and his great blue-veined nose seems an irreverence on the part of the modeller, as if to set the crowd, as the procession comes by, nudging each other in the ribs and telling merry stories of the monarch.

And so from this garish bright assembly we run downstairs again into the Abbey, and enter that strange muddle and miscellany of objects both hallowed and ridiculous. Yet now the impression is less tumultuous than before. Two presences seem to control its incoherence, as sometimes a chattering group of people is ordered and quieted by the entry of someone before whom, they know not why, they fall silent. One is Elizabeth, beckoning; the other is an old top hat.

VIRGINIA WOOLF.

"Artists and Models": Through the Stereoscope

Left Eye: The Senses

THE flash of smooth lechery, the flash of smooth innocence: the satin bed, occupied by the satin girl, toward which the sleek youth leaps as the curtain falls; the young man and girl hidden by the faintly anachronistic pink parasols—*a house just for two, me and you;* the quick staccato shout *Money*—rolls of bills thrown to the floor, to entice the proud "little ladies"; at the night club, the shouts of derision that answer *How much have you got? Ten dollars.* The raucous comedienne who has her bandaged husband stretched out like an accordion and takes the axe to him, because he is worth more dead than damaged, in a moment will shed her gingham, axe, and gin-bottle for black tulle with a diamond stomacher—"dressed by Joseph"—and a mocking cultured accent. She will speak of her country house and a dinner-party of seventy-five. She will scream out her ugliness—"there have been complaints!"—shrug her heavy shoulders and kick her incongruously pretty legs. The fast clever comedian is before the curtain, telling of his conquests among the chorus girls, boasting of his new car carefully by name, imputing sexual inversion to the chorus men. *A naked woman to ride down Broadway on a horse: Let's go: I haven't seen a horse in years.* The two hoofers chained together at wrist and ankle. It takes work to be as good as that, to get that unison (the worn spot in the carpet of the hotel room.) And here is a slave market, a white girl in a crowd of Chinamen, naked belly and legs, the hips circled by a kind of flange. She struggles; she falls backward sprawling down the stairs. She is stabbed; the

Right Eye: The Intellect

Implicit in so dull a show as this revue is a statement of what our machine age values, not only in art as such, but in human behavior generally—a reflection of those ambivalent moods engendered by the *mores* of modern civilization. The ranklings of competition are compensated by a sterile conviviality, not entirely archaic because cunningly reinvested in the expectation of future increment. (It is significant, in this regard, to remember that Rotary permits in its organization only *one* representative of each community industry.)

To find in history similar barrenness of invention, one naturally looks to Rome in the century after the Silver Age, "where such mental torpor continued through a long period of sound social and economic conditions." (Tenney Frank: "The Economic History of Rome." For a detailed discussion, *v.* pp. 476-477, *op. cit.*) The parallel is, of course, not complete: this Roman civilization, while commercial and mercantile, was not so mechanistic as ours; further, it seems to have lacked a softness, a shoddy of sentimentality. The slave class had no delusion as to its status. Entertainment held out to this latter class no spurious vicarious identification with leisure, and no consequent tendency to compromise with a guilty conscience on holiday. The Roman who went to a show could feel reasonably certain of an exhibition satisfactorily corrupt. We dare not expect performance as thorough—merely the tension of the tether in diametrical directions to a limit whose circumference is not depravity, but vulgarity only.

The significance of dress as an index to the pecuniary

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white stomach becomes smeared with crimson; the fascinated eye expects it to well in pools about her. Switch to the unspotted virginal: white lace and silver slippers—*a house just for two, me and you.*

My mother is wonderful—All mothers are wonderful—Mine is the most wonderful. Tinned dew of the breast. *Pardon me, little lady, but my friend is a baron and would like to meet you. Then I'll say, I'll pay the bill! Five hundred dollars. A lot of money. Five thousand dollars.* Interior of the Taj Mahal, with Javanese houris in brilliants, and, gauzed in lights at the cornice, one naked girl with crossed arms, looking, curiously enough, as dressed as the others. Exterior of Rheims Cathedral with nuns completely swaddled in snappy habits, and crimson chorus cardinals. *I am the voice of MUSIC!* Or machine-made extravagance again offered in a backdrop like a dropsical Spanish shawl, fatly embroidered with wormlike vine and swollen rose: girls languish under the great distended octopus design. Then the so-admired clockwork creature: twenty girls in line, twenty left legs that swing automatically out, twenty right legs that swing across, as accurate as crank-shafts seen in slow motion—engagingly mechanical flesh and blood. The Prince of Entertainers: thin black legs prancing in a groove, heavy jowls grinning. Here he is: each limb, and the derby hat tipped back and forth upon the forehead, a baton; hand and leg quick with a kind of juggler's sleight, to waken these distorted instruments: hooped horns, wood, tin, brass, stretched skin, to their deep pitch, long subtly delayed swing, whinnying modulation. At the end, sprung from and nourished by cruel laugh, bare flesh, tawdry sequin, a brass flower of sound opens against the ear. The big horn: profundity and glitter heard and seen alike.

The loud wah-wah. The exquisite klaxon wah-wah: cry of a brass-throated child—snapped out—drawn back. Exciting flexible resilient metal cry, shout—against saxophones as soft as love. At dawn-nih-hih-ing. Lovely murderous innocent lulling wah-wah: don't stop; go on forever.

LOUISE BOGAN.

culture has been noted by Professor Thorstein Veblen ("Theory of the Leisure Class," ch. VII.) The revue exploits this expression in histrionic terms, at the same time reflecting the conflicting trends peculiar to that culture. There is always an escape from reality, and a return to it, an alternation of what passes for oriental and for occidental décor. The investiture of the ladies of the ensemble therefore at times must be an ambitious habiliment of otherworldliness, and at other times a renewed appeal to the modern mercantile sense. Or one is impressed by the stamp of the machine, the influence of automotive exhibitions revealed in an exposition of structural detail.

Jokes are, we know, to be taken seriously; and the mirth of a crowd betrays a less subtle sincerity than that of the unprotected segregate individual. In a dramatized form requiring less draft on the imagination, sharpened to a fine edge of cruelty and rapacity, their sense of value is competent indeed. What is in the abstract merely ludicrous or ridiculous—*e. g.,* a misconception of the purchasing power of the dollar—involves the comic perception in the keenest ecstasy when the *argumentum ad crumenam* produces the exquisite consequences of physical violence.

High art culminates, for the mood of this house, in two achievements: one, an elaborate and extravagant surplus of persons and material, a visible assumption of expenditure, that is to say, the Veblenian Canons of Conspicuous Waste and Conspicuous Leisure. But the ambivalent emotion finds expression in applause of the spectacle of a person, or even an animal, performing Conspicuous Labor; thus, the harder a dancer keeps working, the better the dance must be, or a song is beautifully rendered in proportion to the anhelation and diaphoresis it costs the singer.

This emotional divarication would not have titillated a post-Silver-Age Roman. What conscientious qualms his predatory life induced were not soothed by inexpensive tender attitudes toward familiars. Not sentimentality, but suicide, was the antidote for murder. Falling upon his sword, he found the steel its own antithesis.

ROLFE HUMPHRIES.

A COMMUNICATION

The British Know

SIR: American interest in the British unemployment situation, and British interest in the fluctuations of unemployment in the United States, should be not merely welcomed but encouraged. It may be that unemployment is not so much an international disorder, to be corrected by international readjustments, as a series of domestic disorders to be alleviated by separate home treatments; but it is none the less true that those who are engaged upon their own problem of unemployment can obtain a good deal of guidance by a study of the unemployment problems of other countries.

For this reason it is greatly desirable that the information obtained by the various countries should be as full and accurate as circumstances permit, and that any figures issued should be accompanied by a clear account of what precisely they represent. The extent to which these two things, information and explanation, can be achieved by any country is primarily a domestic matter. . . All that one people can rightly ask of another is that the data published shall be studied and discussed in the light of the explanations given as to their nature, scope, and content.

The above reflections are prompted by certain references to the British unemployment figures contained in a letter written by an American Commissioner of Labor and published in an American magazine. The letter, it appears, had its origin in an article headed "A Prosperous New Year?" in the issue of the New Republic for January 11, 1928. In the course of that article the following passage occurred:

> While (alone among the prominent industrial nations), we have no accurate measure of unemployment, it is generally believed that an extraordinary number are out of work.

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This remark caught the attention of the editor of the American journal Printers' Ink, who straightway wrote to Mr. Ethelbert Stewart, Commissioner of the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, asking whether it were true that the United States had "no accurate measure of unemployment" and whether it were a fact that other nations "had actually outstripped us in gathering this vital information." Mr. Stewart's reply to this inquiry is printed *in extenso* in the January 26 issue of Printers' Ink. The letter has come to my notice and I am moved to comment upon it, not by way of controversy but in the interest of a right understanding of the British unemployment figures.

Mr. Stewart begins by saying that ". . . the statistics of unemployment in most foreign countries are very close to worthless." I will concern myself solely with his reference to the British figures. These, Mr. Stewart considers, are the best; but even these are "very much over-estimated" as to their accuracy, and are "grossly incomplete." In demonstration of this view Mr. Stewart devotes the greater part of his letter to an account of the British unemployment figures. The account he gives is, I am sorry to say, incorrect in almost every particular.

The British Labor Ministry issues two main series of unemployment figures. One is the weekly total of "Persons on the Registers of Employment Exchanges." This figure, which for March 5 was 1,094,500, includes everybody who on that day was "registered for work." It includes all persons, insured or uninsured against unemployment, who were signing the registers. It includes persons not receiving benefit as well as those receiving benefit. It includes children under sixteen, domestic servants, agricultural workers and uninsured persons of all kinds so far as these were on the books as applicants for work. The other series is the monthly figures, given in the British Ministry of Labor Gazette, of "Books Lodged." This series is confined to persons inside the insurance scheme. The term "Books Lodged" derives from the fact that when an insured person comes out of work he must deposit his personal unemployment-insurance book (containing stamps representing the contributions made on his behalf into the fund) at an employment exchange, and the book must lie at the exchange until the man gets work again. Once a month these "lodged books" are counted up. The count gives a substantially accurate measure of the number of insured persons unemployed, and, as the total number of insured persons is known, reliable unemployment *percentages* can be, and are, worked out. These percentages relate, it is true, strictly to insured persons; but insured persons number over 11¾ millions out of a total wage- and small-salary-earning population of perhaps 17 millions, and the rate of unemployment is almost certainly less among those who are not insured than among the insured.

From this necessarily brief explanation of what the figures do in fact represent and include, I turn to the account of them given by the United States Commissioner of Labor.

I will do no more than mention, in passing, his statements that the British Unemployment Insurance scheme exempts apprentices, exempts "clerks and other occupations" earning more than £250 a year, excludes banking and public utility companies, and excludes certain groups of railway employees. Three of these statements are inaccurate and the fourth is incomplete; but since the persons who are in fact excluded from the scheme are precisely those who are little liable to unemployment, the tendency of these exclusions is to make the British unemployment percentages exaggerate rather than minimize the rate of general unemployment.

A more serious error in this category is the reference to young people who have left school. This passage of Mr. Stewart's letter must be quoted verbatim:

> Another thing that is either not known or is glibly passed over and forgotten by the average writer on this subject is that for nearly ten years employment has been so scarce in Great Britain that young men and women leaving school have been unable to find employment and, therefore, never having been employed, are unable to get upon the unemployment register. The army of these young people who have never been able to get work increases year by year. In 1927, it was estimated as covering 300,000 people.

I do not know what is the source of these supposed facts nor who is the estimator of the 300,000. I can only say that neither fact nor figure bear any resemblance to what is known by competent authorities to be the employment position of young persons in Great Britain. In serious discussion one would point out, among other things, that juveniles leaving school apply at the exchanges in large numbers for their first employment, and that at any nearby date round about 10,000 young people under eighteen years of age who are applying to enter employment for the first time are "on the registers" of the exchanges and are included in the weekly figures; but what is a figure of 10,000 alongside a figure of 300,000?

These and other misconceptions as to the kind and number of persons who are not covered by the insurance scheme are, however, of little moment alongside the completely erroneous account which Mr. Stewart gives of the statistical treatment of persons who are inside the scheme. It is necessary again to quote verbatim:

> In order to be registered as unemployed, the worker must satisfy the authorities of a labor exchange that he is employable, has been genuinely employed, is genuinely seeking work, and genuinely willing to take a place if it can be found. He must have been out of work a period of six days before he can be registered.

Not one word of this, of course, is true. Mr. Stewart has apparently got hold of the conditions an applicant must satisfy in order to *qualify for benefit,* and has taken them to be the conditions on which alone he can be *registered* as unemployed. Obviously, a person must register before his title to benefit can even begin to be examined, and it is a commonplace that tens of thousands of persons continue to register for employment (the latest figure is 85,985) after their claims to benefit have been disallowed, and that a further large number (the latest figure is 90,853) register for employment without making any claim to benefit. All these are included in the figure of 1,094,500 for March 5 of "persons on the registers." In the monthly figures of books lodged, issued for February 20, there are included

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a further 115,826 persons not in receipt of benefit whose books were in the "two months' file." These are not even "on the registers." They are included by the British authorities in order to ensure that an adequate allowance shall be made for insured persons who may be still unemployed but who are not visiting the exchanges.

Equally wide of the facts is the following:

> Again, he is on the roll a maximum of twenty-six weeks in one year, so that at best a man is idle six days before he gets on the register and at the end of twenty-six weeks he is dropped from the register, even though he has no employment.

This is in part the same confusion as that noted above: the confounding of "on benefit" with "on the register." But it has a further confusion of its own. The passage just quoted is not even true of the "receipt of benefit." Mr. Stewart has quoted the conditions for the receipt of what is called "standard benefit" and overlooked the fact that when standard benefit is exhausted the insured person becomes entitled to receive, on fulfillment of the conditions, what is called "extended" benefit, and, in fact, one-half the persons receiving unemployment pay are receiving it as "extended benefit" outside the provisions quoted in the passage above.

So far, what Mr. Stewart has done is to suppose, quite wrongly, (a) that the British unemployment figures take no account of any but insured persons; (b) that there are vast numbers of unemployed persons who are not insured; and (c) that no one is counted as unemployed unless he is receiving benefit. Even more mistaken are Mr. Stewart's references to the "ways of keeping down the total of the unemployed in England." Lest it should be thought that something is being read into Mr. Stewart's letter, I must quote again verbatim. He is dealing with a supposed transfer of persons from the "unemployed register to the poor relief fund."

> This seems a favorite method when it is believed to be desirable to decrease the public statement of unemployed for reasons that appear to have their origin in politics or in commercial requirements.

Of this alleged deliberate manipulation of the unemployment figures Mr. Stewart gives three main examples. The first is that since January 2, 1928, persons aged sixty-five and over, who then become eligible for old-age pensions, will no longer be eligible for unemployment benefit. This is spoken of as "a new class" and a "way of keeping down the total of the unemployed." The suggestion that the British government set up the pensions scheme in order to reduce the published figures of unemployment is too fantastic for serious comment. The effect of the new provisions upon the unemployment statistics (which in any case is not great) is known, has been officially announced, and is referred to in the Ministry of Labor Gazette wherever occasion makes it desirable.

"Another method," Mr. Stewart says, "is to transfer large blocks from the unemployed register to the poor relief fund." Alone among the allegations made in Mr. Stewart's letter, this one has a certain currency in Great Britain and a few months ago the whole question was inquired into and the results published in an Official Report (Cmd. 2984). The inquiry demonstrated that so far from the Poor Law figures having gone up as the unemployment figures went down, the rule was that when the unemployment figures had fallen, the Poor Law figures had fallen as much or more.

The third way of "keeping the total down" mentioned by Mr. Stewart is:

> To consider all industrial disputes as strikes and all participants in such disputes as ineligible for registration as unemployed. For instance, the locked-out coal miners were considered strikers and refused registration.

It is not true that all disputants are considered strikers—but that is a minor point. Mr. Stewart is suggesting that persons who are away from work, not because there is not work for them, but because they are engaged in a trade dispute, should be counted as unemployed, and that to omit them from the figures is to "keep down the total." Why? The state of being unemployed and that of being engaged in a trade dispute are quite different and distinct matters. I do not know of any industrial country which confuses these by merging them. But if anyone should wish for some odd reason to add disputants and unemployed together, the figures for disputants are to his hand in the British official publications.

One last point Mr. Stewart makes to show that the unemployment figures, even of Great Britain, are "grossly incomplete." It is that the figures "in addition to all the complications cited above, do not cover the partially employed." That is quite half true: they do not cover persons who are not working Saturdays, or who knock off an hour early in the afternoon, but what would be the point in mixing up such people with the unemployed? They do cover, however, all persons whose names are on the registers on each Monday, including those who have only that morning registered and who may get work next day. The total contains a due percentage of persons who are merely changing from one job to another or who are working three days a week or less. Mr. Stewart's criticisms of the figures on this point are the more curious in that the British authorities have been at great pains to throw light on this very point, and in February, 1926, began to distinguish, in their monthly unemployment totals, between persons who were wholly unemployed and those who were temporarily stopped. This sub-analysis, with full explanation, has been given in every issue of the Ministry of Labor Gazette since that date.

The process of correcting Mr. Stewart's mistakes is necessarily more lengthy than that of making the mistakes, and may, I fear, have wearied your readers. I hope, however, that at the end they will feel satisfied that the British unemployment figures, though far from perfect, are free from nearly all the defects attributed to them by Mr. Stewart, and that the administrators of the British unemployment register are constantly on the watch to improve their figures, to exclude errors, and to make plain in every case exactly what the figures mean.

W. H. Beveridge.

London School of Economics and Political Science, London.

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The Bolshevist Religion

The Mind and Face of Bolshevism: An Examination of Cultural Life in Soviet Russia, by René Fülöp-Miller; translated from the German by S. Flint and D. F. Tait. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 433 pages. $6.

A CERTAIN greatness of mind is necessary for writing about contemporary Russia; and although ten years have passed since the Bolshevist revolution, the necessary magnanimity and poise are still lacking in almost all the literature that deals with Soviet institutions. Mr. René Fülöp-Miller's introduction gave me some hope that he, perhaps, could rise above partisanship and narrow political discretions; for he is an authority on Dostoyevsky and he has spent, I believe, a little time in Russia. His book is full of valuable material, and many of the issues he raises are significant ones; but after a careful reading of his pages I have no faith in his breadth of vision, his fairness, or his ability to understand a phenomenon outside the usual range of his contacts and prepossessions. One cannot go very far into his chapters without seeing that Mr. Fülöp-Miller is making out a case: beneath the robes of the judge one detects the nervous gestures of the prosecuting attorney. He is plainly afraid of Bolshevism; afraid and contemptuous. Let us see why.

The ground that Mr. Fülöp-Miller traverses is full of interest: it covers the art, the poetry, the education, the ethics, the philosophy of Bolshevism. The central moment of Bolshevism, according to Mr. Fülöp-Miller, is the concept of the collective man: this consists in a "passionate protest against the value and significance of the individual personality," in a disbelief in the validity of the inner life, and an effort to subordinate personality to external mechanisms—organization, machinery, technological efficiency—which can be collectively projected and worked. "Certain Bolsheviks . . . already discern and proclaim the time when, with the progressive mechanizing of all manifestations of life, the last human remnants of everything organic will be sloughed off and replaced by mechanism."

In effect, economic activity becomes the only significant aspect of life: poetry and love and gymnastics and philosophy are functions of the economic mechanism. This view is the central dogma of Bolshevism; what conflicts with it is heresy. Plato's metaphysics is heresy; Mach's scientific philosophy is heresy; the assumptions that underlie a good part of art and literature are also heresy. The words dogma and heresy are rather curious words to use in connection with a creed that professes to be matter-of-fact and scientific; but Mr. Fülöp-Miller is right, I think, in treating Bolshevism as a modern religion.

Like Christianity, like Mohammedanism, like the French Revolution (which Mr. Fülöp-Miller curiously ignores), it offers a scheme of salvation. This is not a new discovery; but the author puts it forward with a certain amplitude of detail.

All this so far is fairly plain sailing; and one can hold these views, I think, without particular bias or prejudice. Unfortunately, Mr. Fülöp-Miller assumes the same sort of finality for the dogma that the Bolshevist does, and instead of studying its paradoxical consequences, with a little humor and restraint, he carries on a game of perpetual shadow-boxing with his grim, soulless, mechanized, impersonal opponent. Consider where the paradox lies: it is a gigantic one. Here is a view of society that regards a communist revolution as the inevitable outcome of technological processes: it appears in the most backward part of Europe, where the peasants predominate and an ancient routine of husbandry is the principal source of wealth. This revolution glorifies the collective man: it is accomplished by a mere handful of ardent, resolute spirits. It scoffs at the role of personality, and it is dominated by a very great personality, that of Lenin. Ideologically, it considers the inner life futile: but the first manifestation of the revolution is not in efficient steel-works nor gigantic technical collaborations, nor even in societies for carrying watches and promoting punctuality: it first manifests itself in a monumental art that throws up great plaster figures in the public places and swarms over the sides of buildings, trains, vacant walls. These Bolsheviks believe in the inevitable determination of esthetics and philosophy by technology: but without waiting for any fundamental changes in technology they give rise to a hundred doctrines and a hundred schools of Bolshevist art, poetry, dramatics, music. They do not believe in ideals, but they look upon the American subway and the American skyscraper as ideals, and they seek to participate in this mechanical religion by adopting the ritual of Mr. Taylor, the efficiency expert. And finally: they denounce the existing religions and perform physiological experiments upon the relics of saints, whilst they revere the pages of Marx and Lenin as a Baptist believes in the Old Testament, and mummify the physical body of Lenin and place him in a tomb to be worshiped—precisely as if Lenin were Ghenghis Khan or Napoleon or a Russian saint of the fourteenth century.

Stirred by this religion, a great mass of people have altered the fundamental conditions of their life: in the midst of terrible physical privations, lack of food and clothing and, in the big cities, an indecent lack of adequate housing, they have equalized the conditions of living, they have created a society which endeavors to maintain the rigorous justice of the shipwreck, even if it lacks the easier egalitarianism of a picnic. If in the act of establishing these conditions the Marxian ideological enthusiasts have attempted to make music out of factory whistles, dancing out of mechanical motions, philosophy out of Hegelian obscurantism, and in general silk purses out of sow's ears, one must marvel at the passion and energy behind these manifestations, rather than at their folly. In the haste and desperateness of these efforts, many things were jerrybuilt which will have to be replaced; many institutions were thrown down—like the coöperatives—which wisdom has already put up again; and many blind alleys were explored. The idealization of mechanical labor may be absurd; but it seems to me somewhat less offensive to human dignity than the idealization of the House of Romanov; and this applies equally to many other institutions and events. It is better to conceive a symphony out of factory sirens than to acquiesce in a civilization that accepts the divorce of art and labor as a permanent condition of industrial efficiency.

As for Mr. René Fülöp-Miller's notion that the mind and face of Bolshevism is an entirely different one from that of Western Europe, it seems to me massively untrue. In the abject worship of technology, Bolshevism only carries further the typical bias of western thought during the last three centuries: there is nothing in Bolshevist art or philosophy that has not been a commonplace in European thought during the last hundred years, and if we are in revolt against it, it is only because we have experimentally carried the process to many unsatisfactory conclusions, whereas Russia, through its backwardness, still regards mechanization as an abstract entity. Had Mr. Fülöp-

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Miller not been making out a case, he would have pointed out that Russia has, particularly since 1924, been counterbalancing this mechanical bias by recognizing and encouraging regional cultures, with their national and racial traditions, with their respect for local habits, customs, languages. Here the Bolshevists have worked firmly toward cultural individuation; and their methods might very well serve as pattern for every other great state.

What emerges from this ten years of chaos and experiment is something quite different, in short, from the soulless, mechanized collective man that Mr. Fülöp-Miller hates and fears—and that every humane person equally hates and fears. That collective man has to face the ordeal of reality; and if human beings are what we think they are, organically and psychologically, one need not worry too desperately about this particular kind of bogey. The human mind is capable of projecting all sorts of false notions—demons, archangels, witches, pain-and-pleasure personalities, Gradgrinds, Robots, Babbitts and mechanized non-individuals; but in the long run these ideas and projections lose their efficacy, and the richer, organic personality which belongs to all of us emerges at last, and modifies or destroys these false notions. Meanwhile, under the influence of the Bolshevist religion, Russia has explored the possibilities of economic equality and of the socialized direction of industry. The religion itself does not carry to me the odor of sanctity; and I do not think that its rational bases will hold up under examination; but of all the religions which men have sought to practise during the last three centuries, it stands head and shoulders above the rest in the original quality of its leadership and its relevance to the issues that move modern men; so that even its errors—and I believe they are many—are fruitful and significant. We have yet to see if we can accomplish as much by science and technology and the arts without throwing the errors in for good measure.

LEWIS MUMFORD.

Psychology—If You Must

About Ourselves (Psychology for Normal People), by H. A. Overstreet. New York: W. W. Norton and Company, Inc. 291 pages. $3.

Understanding Human Nature, by Alfred Adler. New York: Greenberg. 286 pages. $3.50.

Character and the Conduct of Life, by William McDougall. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. 390 pages. $3.75.

THE dispute as to the content and extent of man's original nature, which for so long occupied the center of the psychological stage, is for the present somewhat in the background. It retired before the energetic campaign, now in full swing, to enlighten man as to his *self,* original or acquired or both (in any case of minor importance) so that he may no longer enjoy the bliss of ignorance.

In the book "About Ourselves," the philosopher-educator speaks. Simply and affably he translates into normal behavior such mysterious psychoanalytic terms as fixation, projection, rationalizing, paranoia, hysteria, phobia and regression (all the illustrations of which are, however, instances of arrested development). These are all symptoms of a *contractive* personality which is further characterized by a narrow range of interests and a tendency to withdraw from people, activities and ideas. We not only need to change these personalities into *expansives* with a wide range of interests and a tendency to participate in and share activities and ideas with other people, but we must change also the environment so that it is favorable to the development of *expansives* and not of *contractives:* careful diet, plenty of air and sunshine and wise, understanding parents, guiding the child in a leisurely manner through an educational program which should include plenty of literature, chiefly biography and poetry, music and other arts—an educational program which should be based on some form of the project method, so that both student and teacher may participate. Adults as well as children are meant to benefit by these changes.

Undoubtedly these suggestions point in the right direction, and are worthy of further thought and also some action. Had Mr. Overstreet directed his energy to this aspect of the subject, he would have fulfilled a greater need. For much too little emphasis is now being placed on constructive programs and far too much on all manner of maladjustments, with the result that the general public has become "maladjustment-conscious" instead of "adjustment-conscious," which is very poor therapy.

Mr. Overstreet's treatment of regressions, fixations, etc., is questionable also on the ground of completeness, though, of course, he may have limited it intentionally to suit the needs of the general public. But to vouchsafe the guess, for example, that an over-solicitous mother is responsible for irresolution in adult life is to invite many a mother—as clinical psychologists know—to swing over abruptly to an ill-assumed indifference either with the same child or with another child who may need the very solicitude the other child could have done without. Such a guess is taken too seriously and acted upon too zealously by the average person, uninformed as to the fundamental causes of irresolution and unaware that an over-solicitous mother, an indifferent mother and a wise mother may all have superlatively resolute and normally resolute children as well as irresolute children. Incomplete knowledge is dangerous, particularly if the novice does not know that it is incomplete.

This is not to deny the fact, however, that a fuller treatment of the subject may be unwarranted and even equally risky for general consumption. If the reader can glean Dr. Adler's thesis from his poorly organized volume, he is unquestionably enriched. He has a fuller insight into human nature if he knows that it is complex and that behavior may be misleading, that aggressiveness, over-confidence, etc., may in reality be expressions of insecurity, that seclusiveness, irresolution, etc., may be symptomatic of a desire to dominate which is an expression of an unsatisfied craving for significance, that a feeling of insecurity is present in greater or less degree in the consciousness of every person and that it dates back to infancy when helplessness and inadequacy are definite experiences (this may be justly questioned), that training should always take into account the limitations of those trained, whether mental or physical, and should seek to develop the social feeling as a check on the self-feeling.

Let us hope that the reader can extract these facts without being side-tracked by the case-analyses, which do not always sound convincing, or by the discussion of character-traits, which is one-sided, or by the oft-repeated evaluations of children's reactions in terms of adult experiences, an error to which psychoanalysts are especially prone. Such sections of the book serve to engender an alarmist point of view, to make the reader "maladjustment-conscious," which may be more dangerous than the naïveté which prevailed before the dawn of psychoanalysis.

In this, the age of "Stories," one must not expect psychology to escape the process of simplification and popu-

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larization. But one has a right to expect of those who simplify and popularize that they should carefully weigh and measure the consequences. There may be no palpable danger in imperfect assimilation of history or philosophy, but there is a real danger in the case of psychology, for it permits of application. I see too many people who "have gone and got psychology," applying it freely on their children and others, with a complete lack of understanding of the issue involved; and I hear too many people "gossiping" about regressions, fixations, complexes, etc. (the psychologist can no longer use the terms without shuddering at their banality), not to hope that more thought will be given to the how and why of popularizing psychology before another book is written for the general public.

Mr. McDougall seems to have been motivated by a similar skepticism of and even revolt against popular applied psychology when he wrote his book "Character and the Conduct of Life." It is primarily "an essay in practical morals" based upon his "consistently thought-out scheme of human nature." This scheme conceives of human nature as made up of intelligence, general and special; instincts or emotional tendencies, such as fear, anger, tenderness, curiosity, sex, gregariousness, self-assertion, self-effacement, sympathy, aversion, constructiveness, hoarding, food-seeking and bodily functions; temperament, which is "the resultant of all the chemical influences of the body upon our mental life" and which determines in a large measure the individual's pattern of activity; and temper, which colors the individual's activity, as with ardor, sluggishness, hopefulness or despondency.

These factors are all inborn, but, with the exception of temper, subject to modification. Should it come to pass, for example, that certain of the more desirable tendencies, as sympathy or tenderness, are found wanting in strength, or that some of the less desirable tendencies, as hoarding or fear, are found over-strong, reason must play its part in detecting the imperfect distribution, and, with the help of will, in encouraging those tendencies which need strengthening, by hearkening to their faintest stirrings, and in discouraging those which need weakening by suppressing any untimely manifestation. Careful self-observation and honest self-criticism must be practised in order to achieve the necessary control. The author is aware that he is here treading on ground supposedly *verboten* by psychoanalysts, but he makes a timely distinction between harmful and salutary repression.

Mr. McDougall is also to be commended for his inspired outcry against the consuming preoccupation with trivialities, characteristic of the age, which leaves no time or inclination for philosophic calm or critical reflection as to one's motives, goal and conduct. But though one may gladly share with Mr. McDougall "the view that by thought and effort men and races may 'rise on stepping stones of their dead selves to higher things,'" one can reasonably differ as to what these "higher things" should be. Whether, for example, the double standard for men and women in morals, politics and industry is to be regarded as preferable to the much fought-for-and-against single standard must remain for long a moot question; similarly, whether more or less enlightenment and reserve in mattters of sex is better for children cannot be conclusively stated. The writer feels that Mr. McDougall tends too much toward prudery on the question of sex.

It is the limitation of psychology that it cannot *prove*, in the sense that other sciences can prove, that one procedure is better than another. It cannot study the effects of fixed environmental conditions, as the above-mentioned single standard, on identical groups of people, for there are no identical people—even identical twins are not absolutely identical; nor, obviously, can a group of people be kept constant and static while the effects of changing environmental conditions are studied. Denied the technique of science, psychologists are forced to work in a more or less trial-and-error method, which, in the long run, may be as scientific as any method, but it must be handled critically, cautiously and with reserve. This is recommended as a further reason for thinking twice before encouraging popular juggling with psychological data.

AUGUSTA ALPERT.

Wisdom of the Blood?

England Reclaimed, by Osbert Sitwell. New York: Doubleday, Doran and Company. 99 pages. $2.

Quintillions, by Robert Clairmont. New York: Lincoln MacVeagh: The Dial Press. 104 pages. $3.50.

IN AN introductory poem to his new book of poems, Mr. Sitwell remarks that poetry

> is the wisdom of the blood,
> That scarlet tree within, which has the power
> To make dull words bud forth and break in flower.

As definitions of poetry go, that symbolic statement is not so bad. Almost everyone would agree that a *sine qua non* of poetry is this intimate and instinctive and curiously (in a sense) impersonal voice, which speaks not so much out of one's specific heart as out of one's generic. To the source of this many names have been given, all of them suggestive, none of them precise. We can call it the blood, the unconscious, the root, the race, God, the oversoul; but whatever we call it, we know it when we hear it, and we insist that the finest poetry must have it. We do not mean by this anything so obvious as that all poetry must be, in any intellectual or metaphysical sense, profound; but we do mean that even its simplest statements and feelings should have the golden immediacy of word and rhythm which we can only satisfactorily compare with the golden immediacy of the yellow to the crocus. Without this, even the cleverest poetry is dead; with it, the most naïve of utterances is moving. And that is all we know.

And Mr. Sitwell's poetry is an excellent case in point. Mr. Sitwell is exceedingly accomplished: he is terribly accomplished: he is erudite, witty, dexterous, eloquent: he has a sharp eye, and that special sort of fair-haired obtuse shrewdness which is almost a prerogative of the English: he knows his history, and can refer as easily to Ur and the Chaldees as to the Brookes of Borneo: he knows the English language, and tosses it and catches it with a conjurer's virtuosity. And nevertheless, in this book of charming eclogues, one questions whether anywhere is precisely that "wisdom of the blood" for which one always has so famished a craving. Here are some delicious thumb-nail portraits—or perhaps one would better describe them as Kate Greenaway watercolors; for they have a good deal of Kate Greenaway's Botticelli primness and precision. One thinks of those absurd little hillocks, of the color of spinach, starred all over with daisies and primroses, very much as the spinach is mooned with slices of egg; the petals, the twigs, the very blades of grass are counted; it is as primitive as Cimabue, but it is also self-conscious. Mr. Sitwell's poetry is like that. It is very precise, very meticulous. Every detail is put in, and every detail has its ingenious epithet. It is all very *soigné*,

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very detached, very witty: a sort of embroidery world, exact and yet unreal. These flowers and trees and country scenes are not flowers and trees and country scenes: they are quaint pictures done in bright-colored wools, and all of them smelling of lavender. It is a kind of polite English Spoon River, or Rother, done bucolically on a counterpane.

In short, Mr. Sitwell is extremely clever, but he is, at bottom, one guesses, lacking in that ultimate *vox et praeterea nihil* of the poet who is a poet by instinct and necessity. He amuses us, he delights us—but he never disturbs us, he never reveals. Technically speaking, he is adroit, if a little prolix and over-descriptive: he has that inordinateness, that inability to know when to stop, which is so often, alas, a characteristic of the clever. . . . Mr. Clairmont is Mr. Sitwell's antithesis in this: his wit is more instinctive, less calculated; he knows something of the Chinese "stop-short" technique: he can pause at the right moment and allow the overtones to whisper. If Mr. Masters has oddly contributed to Mr. Sitwell's vocabulary (if one may use "vocabulary" in a psychotonic sense), Mr. Sandburg and perhaps Mr. William Carlos Williams have contributed to Mr. Clairmont's. It is perhaps not uncomplimentary to anyone concerned to say that at such moments he is not at his best. When he is at his best, he is delightful. He carries humor into poetry unruffled, with all its wings and feathers. It is humor, and yet, because (precisely) it has this *"vox,"* this odd something-or-other, this bloom of innocence or iridescence of the sly, this consciously bright air of always stopping (or frequently, not to flatter the author too much) at the point of maximum suggestion, it is also poetry. It has not behind it such a weight as lies behind Mr. Sitwell's: it is slight. It is a pound of feathers, as against Mr. Sitwell's pound of German silver. It makes one wait with considerable eagerness to see what Mr. Clairmont will do next: his danger being that he might get himself lost in a world of whim. In the meantime, one rests on the simple fact that "Quintillions" is an unusually delightful book.

CONRAD AIKEN.

The Wild Body

The Wild Body, by Wyndham Lewis. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. 298 pages. $2.50.

AS A writer of fiction, Mr. Lewis is an exceptionally fine painter. Employing the method of behaviorism —which he reviles—and often resorting to the language of Freudianism—which he claims to detest—he somehow succeeds in drawing an extraordinarily vivid picture of the human animal; he makes a certain type of characters live as they never lived before. With this achievement his readers should be satisfied, and yet they will probably demand something more, feeling that characters alone do not make a novel or even a short story; they will demand that character should result in action, which in turn should influence character. . . . The nine stories in the present volume are spattered with violent incidents—deaths, quarrels, wife-beating, trickery—but they give a peculiarly static effect; they impress one as being mere sketches, and sketches, moreover, which are written in an unbelievable style. The author says, "In every way that man could replace the implement that here would be done. . . . His lips eructated with the incredible indecorum that appears to be the monopoly of liquids. . . . A scornful optimism, with its confident onslaughts on our snobbism, will not make material existence a peer for our energy." . . . More flagrant examples could be quoted, as could hundreds of really brilliant phrases, which, however, are rarely combined into brilliant sentences. In general, Mr. Lewis disregards the sound of words; he partially disregards their sense; and one feels that he would have been more successful had he sketched these peasants, innkeepers, and tramps in the medium of paint, which he respects, rather than in this verbal medium for which he exhibits such a seigniorial contempt.

MALCOLM COWLEY.

The Alcotts

The Father of Little Women, by Honoré Willsie Morrow. Boston: Little, Brown and Company. 282 pages. $3.

May Alcott, a Memoir, by Caroline Ticknor. Boston: Little Brown and Company. 310 pages. $3.

ECCENTRIC saints have a way of tugging at our attention. The good life—or even a persistent attempt at it—awakens a rather envious admiration, if not actual emulation, and the original who is consistently high-minded in pursuance of a possible delusion is a source of perennial and somewhat wistful wonder to the intellectually timid—whether skeptic or conformist.

Such a moral adventurer was Bronson Alcott. The late Professor Royce might have selected him as protagonist for his Philosophy of Loyalty. To choose a cause (worthy or unworthy in the eyes of the world) and stake one's life upon it is glorious gambling—where satisfaction comes with absorption in the game, whether the cause is lost or won. Bronson Alcott was perhaps a more reckless gambler than the strictest altruism would sanction, since his family suffered much for his cause's sake, and responsibilities which to the average well intentioned individual are paramount and coercive were left to his wife, to his long-suffering friends and finally to his daughter Louisa—upon whose devoted industry the entire family subsisted until she was worn out in the treadmill. With that irritating form of faith in an ideal which places its apostle eternally in the right and its questioners forever in the ranks of the meanly suspicious, Bronson immolated, without a flicker of hesitation, himself, his family and his associates. His was a pure and selfless devotion to the Good, the Beautiful and the True, and, undaunted by failure after failure of his educational and social schemes, he lived an unquestionably happy, and—who shall deny?—a good life. He was obviously a means of grace to his family, who either developed into saints (necessarily) or were removed by a merciful Providence to transcendental disciplines and rewards. His daughter May, to be sure, lived to beyond maturity in a career of decent, mid-Victorian self-expression, but with the ocean between her and the Concord School of Philosophy, and supported to a considerable extent by the labors of her sister, who ground out sustenance for Philosophy and Art with tireless zeal.

May Alcott's history is—like her father's—one of dedication to a single aim—in her case, the development of her artistic talent—in which her belief was as absolute as the philosopher's in his projects. Their two biographies reveal in successive generations an astounding faith —an unshakable, unquestioning, mystical conviction of life's ideal purpose for them. Although alike in their pertinacious will to power, "spiritual" and intellectual, and the dedication of all their energies to making it prevail at any cost, father and daughter held widely divergent

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views on ultimate values—the transcendental idealist finding salvation in other-worldly aims, the enlightened materialist getting the most from life in determined self-development. Of the equally energetic Louisa's philosophy of life we hear little or nothing. Despite her literary abilities, it was not given formal expression. She appears to have accepted the maintenance of the family and the furtherance of its programs as the best use that could be made of her gifts—and although there is an occasional tinge of envy in the allusions to "Lucky May," it is fiercely ploughed under in literary labors of love.

Louisa, although her appearance is only incidental in these views of the Alcott family, emerges as the heroine of its story. Her literary accomplishment has been found questionable by a succeeding generation. It had its recognition—its possibly unmerited rewards—in its day. But time has curiously shifted estimates of the Alcott genius—and Louisa, to us moderns, is set apart alike from the "sublimity" of Bronson's idealism and the enlightenment of May's self-interest by her gallant and steadfast devotion to an unpretentious cause, her joy in the exercise of her powers for the family, the tireless generosity that make her laborious life an achievement less intellectual than moral. The matter-of-fact disclaimant of any "philosophy"—humorously disillusioned as she was by intimate experience with both the idealistic and materialistic codes—lived out her ideal more convincingly and more enduringly than her ambitious sister or her ecstatic father. Her literary fame was ephemeral—her genius for dauntless and steadfast devotion is immortal.

DOROTHY BACON WOOLSEY.

All America in a Movie

New World Vistas, by James Wood. New York: Brentano's. 317 pages. $2.50.

THESE self-conscious, carefully whittled sketches, which fall into no definite category and are neither stories nor reminiscences, remind one most of Sacheverell Sitwell, who attempted the same recreation of fleeting experience in "All Summer in a Day." Mr. Wood has a sense of the subtle beauty and importance which may adhere to apparently insignificant incidents, but, even more than Mr. Sitwell, he fails to convey his own emotion, and so it is that the episodes upon which he lavishes a good deal of fine writing seem to be rather flat and pointless. Particularly is this true of the sketches which express his reaction to American ideas and personalities, and his piece on Jackie Coogan in London is so humorless and grandiloquent that it approaches the ridiculous. His is a sensitive and tortuous mind which has not found its proper material.

E. H. W.

The Academic Go-Getter

A Man of Learning, by Nelson Antrim Crawford. Boston: Little, Brown and Company. $2.50.

"A MAN OF LEARNING" is the satiric biography of a go-getter in the field of education. Arthur Patrick Redfield, the subject, is a fictitious person. He is represented as a successful college student, a major in the School of Education who, through a deftness at making economically valuable friendships and writing publicity for his *alma mater,* becomes first a professor of Education and then the President of a Great State University. The ironic method is the obvious one of elaborately praising patently unpraiseworthy effort: the moral, apparently, that colleges should teach Greek instead of advertising. The author seems to feel that such men as his protagonist distract such men as himself from the study of serious subjects. They undoubtedly do. Mr. Crawford lashes out bitterly and bravely against such recumbent foes of culture as Rotary, the college Y. M. C. A., Florida real estate, Edgar A. Guest, the poet, 100 percent patriotism and muscular Christianity. Nor does he neglect a hint of the slight sexual irregularities which are now so popular amongst the more sophisticated and sardonic writers on contemporary life. But of those qualities of pain and pleasure, doubt, humor or even occasional honesty which are so common to the human race as occasionally to be evident even among Rotarians, there is no hint. Mr. Crawford runs no risk of having his hero strike back at him: he is a cautious satirist and has chosen a foeman worthy of his wooden sword.

M. P. L.

Contributors

ANNE W. ARMSTRONG has held the positions of personnel director for a large firm in New York City and assistant manager of industrial relations for a nationally known manufacturing company in New York State.

VIRGINIA WOOLF, English novelist, is the author of "Jacob's Room," "To the Lighthouse," and other books.

LOUISE BOGAN is the author of a book of poems, "Body of this Death."

ROLFE HUMPHRIES was one of the editors of Measure.

AUGUSTA ALPERT is a lecturer for the Child Study Association of America.

CONRAD AIKEN is the author of "Priapus and the Pool," "Skepticisms," and "Bring! Bring!"

MALCOLM COWLEY has recently translated Paul Valéry's "Variety."

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